JULY 1963

Commentary

THE PUERTO RICANS

A Commentary Report

Nathan Glazer

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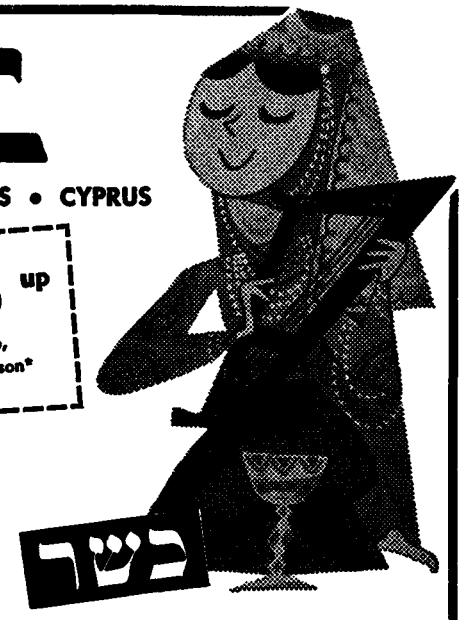

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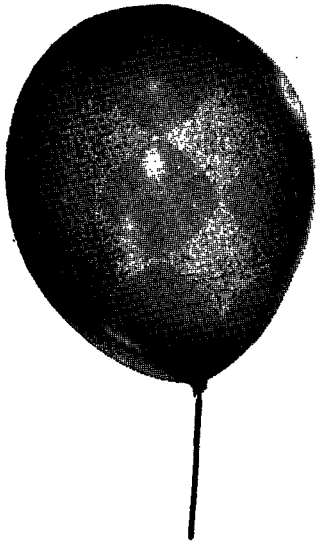

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THE PUERTO RICANS

NATHAN GLAZER

IF SOMEONE twenty-five years ago had looked around at the potential sources of new immigration to New York City, his eye might well have fallen on Puerto Rico, but he would probably also have concluded that the Puerto Ricans, if they came to New York, would have a very hard time adapting. Puerto Rico in the middle 30's—after thirty-five years of American administration—was a scene of almost unrelieved misery. It was overcrowded and disease-ridden, almost without industry, suffering from the collapse of its major cash crop (sugar), its population undereducated and underemployed. Puerto Rico was also unsure in its cultural traditions and without a powerful faith. Nor was there much strength in the Puerto Rican family. In some ways, it was a family similar to the type we find in peasant Europe—patriarchal and authoritarian, the man reigning as absolute despot, demanding obedience and respect from wife and children. However, this was not the family of the Polish or South Italian peasant. The major difference was the wide extent of unstable consensual or common-law marriage; more than one-quarter of the marriages were of this kind, and as a result about one-third of the births were formally illegitimate. In both legal and consensual marriage, moreover, concubinage and sexual adventurism on the part of the men were widely accepted, which meant that children often grew up in confused family settings and that great strain existed between husbands and wives. Children were loved in Puerto Rico—this was fortunate since there were so many. And yet it has frequently been said that their mothers perhaps loved them as much as they did in order to make up for neglect by their husbands.

Marriage in Puerto Rico was typically a matter of the young daughter—as young, even, as thirteen or fourteen—making an escape from home with a man whom her parents had not chosen and whom she herself scarcely knew. A random sample of the island's population in 1947–48 showed that 6 per cent of the married women had been married at fourteen or younger, a fifth had been married at fifteen or sixteen, a quarter at seventeen and eighteen, and another fifth at nineteen or twenty—seven out of ten, in other words, were married before the age of 21! This, combined with the feeling that a man and woman living together should have children as soon as possible, resulted for women in a very early induction into childbearing and for men in a very early induction into the burdens of adulthood.

Still, the family, despite these weaknesses, was perhaps one of the stronger elements in the Puerto Rican situation. Men might have children with a number of different women, but they took responsibility for all of them; there was (for a peasant culture) a relatively high degree of marital breakup, but there was always a place for the children. The institution of the godparents, the *compadre* and *comadre,* provided a second set of parents who stood ready to take over if the first was overburdened with too many children and too many woes, or was broken up by death or desertion. Children in Puerto

NATHAN GLAZER last appeared in these pages in our May 1963 issue with an article, "Herbert H. Lehman of New York." The present essay has been adapted from a section of Mr. Glazer's forthcoming book—done in collaboration with Daniel P. Moynihan—*Beyond the Melting Pot,* to be published in the fall by the MIT Press.

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Rico were neither resented nor neglected; if anything, they suffered from being overprotected.

Nevertheless, this was not, by the standards of other peasant cultures, a tightly knit and well-integrated family system, and when Puerto Ricans first began coming to New York, it did not hold up too well. Indeed, as early as 1930 a social worker at a meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Charities stated that the Puerto Rican family was the biggest social-work problem in New York at the time.

Given all this, who could have expected that the postwar Puerto Rican migration to New York City would turn out to be so successful? It was as little to be expected as the transformation of the island itself—a transformation so startling, and so little heralded by anything in Puerto Rico's earlier history that by 1960 it was reasonable for two new books on Puerto Rico to bear the titles: *Puerto Rico: Land of Wonders* and *Puerto Rico: Success Story.* The great advances in education, health, self-respect, work capacity, and training that have taken place under Luis Muñoz Marin's regime have benefited New York no less than Puerto Rico itself.

New York City had 500 persons of Puerto Rican birth in 1910; 7,000 in 1920; 45,000 in 1930. This group already included some professional people and some small storekeepers, but the overwhelming majority were employed—when they were employed at all—in unskilled work, as laborers, porters, factory operatives, and domestic help. In Manhattan, where three-quarters of the Puerto Ricans lived (in an area bounded by 97th Street on the south, 125th Street on the north, Fifth Avenue on the west, and Third Avenue on the east), they met the old East Harlem Italian community and the growing community of Negroes to the north and west. There was also a large Jewish group in East Harlem, which was then beginning to withdraw to other parts of the city, principally to the Bronx.

There is no record of any conflict between the Puerto Ricans and the Jewish group. With the local Italians, relations were cool. The tight Italian community did not find it easy to open up to strangers: the youth, of course, simply followed in the pattern of adolescent ethnic hostility, and the mild Puerto Ricans, whose history had had plenty of misery but remarkably little violence, were taken aback.

As for relations between the Puerto Ricans and the Negroes, they were more complex, even in those early days. The Puerto Ricans are a mixed people, and though a man's color meant something very different to them from what it meant to white Americans, they knew very well its meaning for Americans. About one-fifth of the Puerto Rican group in New York in the 1930's was listed in census returns as Negro (a slightly smaller proportion than was then listed as colored in the census taken in Puerto Rico itself). Lawrence R. Chenault, who made the first book-length study of the New York Puerto Ricans in the mid-30's, believed that the American Negro was "inclined to resent all of the people from the West Indies [he included the Puerto Ricans in this group] because of their competition in the labor market," while on his part "the Puerto Rican, if white or slightly colored, deeply resents any classification which places him with the Negro. . . . Finding the American-born Negro confronted with serious disadvantages in this country, the Puerto Ricans want to maintain their own group and to distinguish themselves from him. . . . People who have studied the relations of the West Indian groups in Harlem report that . . . the darker the person from the West Indies is, the more intense his desire to speak only Spanish, and to do so in a louder voice."

But whatever the complications introduced in Puerto Rican attitudes toward Negroes by this factor of color, relations actually seem to have been pleasanter than with the Italians. In later years, the young people coming into this first section of Puerto Rican settlement, *"El Barrio,"* would find their adjustment made more difficult by the hostility of Italian youth; Negro youth were on the whole more willing to accept them.

During the war, Puerto Rico, four days from New York by boat, was cut off to normal passenger movement, and there was almost no addition to the Puerto Rican population until 1944. Then there was a heavy migration of 11,000. The next year, with the end of the war, air service between San Juan and New York was introduced,

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which immediately transformed the situation of the potential migrant. In 1945, 13,500 entered the city; in 1946, almost 40,000: New York was in the middle of a mass migration rivaling the great population movements of the first two decades of the century. By 1961, there were 613,000 people of Puerto Rican birth or parentage in the city (representing about 60 per cent of the total number of Puerto Ricans in the continental United States). Since 1961, the number of new arrivals has fallen off sharply and will probably remain low, but the high birth rate of the Puerto Rican group guarantees that it will make up an increasing proportion of the city's population.*

By 1961 also, Puerto Ricans were no longer living almost exclusively in El Barrio in East Harlem. The desperate housing shortage made it impossible for El Barrio to expand into the areas to the north, east, and west, and the vast program of slum clearance and public housing not only broke up the Puerto Rican concentrations (in the oldest and most decrepit buildings, of course) as soon as they were formed, but prevented new concentrations from forming. And so Puerto Ricans spread rapidly throughout the city in the late 1940's and 1950's—to the West Side, to Washington Heights, to Chelsea, to the Lower East Side; and outside of Manhattan, to the downtown Brooklyn and nearby Bedford-Stuyvesant areas; to the Bronx, through Morrisania, Melrose, and other districts; and to various sections of Queens. Thus, unlike the older immigrant groups, they rubbed shoulders with almost everybody in the city.

The Puerto Rican migrants of the 1950's were much better equipped for life in New York than those who came in the 1920's and 1930's. Thanks to Muñoz Marin's programs of economic development, island incomes steadily rose during the 1940's and 1950's, as did the urban population and the number of workers with schooling and experience in manufacturing. And all this naturally reflected itself in the character of the new migrants, who, if anything, represented a better-than-average sample of the island population.

* In 1961 the crude birth rate of the Puerto Rican population of New York was 40 per thousand, as compared with 30 for non-whites and 20 for non-Puerto Rican whites.

The links between the New York Puerto Ricans and the island Puerto Ricans are, indeed, close and complex, and quite different from the relationship of earlier migrant groups to their homelands. Puerto Rico is a part of the United States, and there is no control over movement between the island and the mainland; air passage is not too expensive; and the island government takes a strong interest in its people. Many, in fact, would be hard put to say whether they belonged to the city or the island. A great part of the movement between New York and San Juan consists of people going back and forth for visits, to take care of sick relatives or to be taken care of, of children being sent to stay with one family or another. In other words, going back is usually not, as it was in earlier migrations, either the return of someone who is defeated and incapable of adjustment, or of someone who has made a small competence that will look big in the homeland. Something new, then, has perhaps been added to the New York scene—an ethnic group that will not assimilate to the same degree as others have, but will resemble the strangers who lived in ancient Greek cities, or the ancient Greeks who set up colonies in cities around the Mediterranean.

THERE ARE interesting consequences for the community in this. Relatively few Puerto Ricans—as compared with Negroes or with the non-Puerto Rican white groups—register and vote. One reason may be that the state constitution requires all voters to be literate in English. After Mayor Wagner's election to his third term in 1961, it was estimated that no fewer than 200,000 Puerto Ricans were in effect disfranchised by this provision, and in December 1961 the city filed a proposal for a constitutional amendment that would permit residents to take literacy tests in any language in which a daily or weekly newspaper was published in the state. Clearly, people active in politics and the leaders of the Puerto Rican community expect that Spanish will be the major language in use in the community for as long ahead as anyone can see. As against the situation in some earlier immigrant groups, where dominant opinion both in the city and in the group insisted on the need to learn English and to relegate the immigrant

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tongue to a lesser status, many Puerto Rican leaders—and they are young people—expect and hope that Spanish will maintain an important foothold in their community. The city government, on its side, encourages city employees to learn Spanish, and issues many announcements to the general public in both languages. Conceivably this will change, but Spanish already has a much stronger official position in New York than either Italian or Yiddish ever had. This is one mark of the closeness of the island—physically, politically, and culturally.

Closeness to the island is unquestionably a factor in another interesting characteristic of the Puerto Ricans in New York—the relative weakness of community organization and community leadership among them. The early migrants were so completely working-class and below that the few Puerto Rican professionals and businessmen in the city tended to blend into the non-Puerto Rican Spanish-language group, consisting of immigrants from Spain, Cuba, and other parts of Latin America. But as the number of Puerto Ricans in the city grew, something happened to the general Spanish-speaking group similar to what had happened to the high-status German Jews when the poor East-European Jews arrived—the effort to maintain a separate image for themselves in the public mind failed. When the Puerto Ricans became the overwhelming majority of the city's Spanish-speaking population, the status of all Spanish-speaking people became involved in that of the new immigrants.

These circumstances have led to a recapture by the Puerto Rican group of some of the leadership elements from the longer settled, and perhaps better educated, non-Puerto Ricans. Thus, Emilio Nuñez, the first Spanish-speaking city magistrate (he was appointed in 1951) was born in Spain. Thus, also, the five Spanish-speaking members of the executive board of the Shirtmakers's Union, Local 23 of the ILGWU, include one South American, one Mexican, one Cuban, and only two Puerto Ricans, though Puerto Ricans make up by far the largest part of the Spanish-speaking rank-and-file. And thus, finally, *La Prensa,* an old and established Spanish daily, which never had much Puerto Rican emphasis, was a few years ago completely revamped as a tabloid to appeal directly to the Puerto Rican population.

The fact that a newspaper originally designed for another group—and owned, to boot, by an Italian, Fortune Pope—could so easily be turned into a Puerto Rican organ, is a sign of the relative weakness of what may be called indigenous organization among the Puerto Ricans. The other and much larger newspaper read by Puerto Ricans, *Il Diario,* was originally owned by a Dominican, and edited by a New York newspaperman who had formerly edited a newspaper in the (then) Ciudad Trujillo. Both *La Prensa* and *Il Diario* were bought by the transit operator O. Roy Chalk, who is also not a Puerto Rican, and have recently been merged. This newspaper performs many of the services other immigrant-group newspapers have performed, but it is not the *creation* of the community itself. And this is the kind of situation one finds in many other areas of Puerto Rican life as well. But just recently a new Spanish newspaper was started in the city; the change to a larger degree of self-sufficiency has already begun.

So far as religion is concerned, most of the Puerto Ricans in the city are Catholic, but their participation in Catholic life is small. It is interesting, for example, that only 15,000 Puerto Rican children are in parochial schools in the New York Archdiocese, against almost ten times as many in the public schools—a much smaller percentage than for any other Catholic group in the city. There are only 250 Spanish-speaking priests in the Archdiocese of New York, and most of these—like many priests in Puerto Rico itself—have expressly learned Spanish in order to minister to Puerto Rican Catholics.

As the problems of the first generation are overcome, as families become stabler, incomes higher, and the attachment to American middle-class culture stronger, Catholicism will probably also become stronger among the Puerto Ricans. But it does not seem likely that the Church will play as large a role in their life as it plays for Catholics of European origin. Indeed, there is already a well-established rival to Catholicism in the Puerto Rican community, and if we were to reckon religious strength not by mild affiliation but by real commitment, we might find almost as many Puerto Rican Protestants as Catholics. All told, about 14,000

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Spanish-speaking people belong to the major Protestant denominations in the city, about 10,000 of them in their own all-Spanish churches. Attendance in these churches is high, evangelical zeal puts most Anglo-Saxon Protestantism to shame, and the willingness to spend money on the church is also great.

But the most vigorous and intense religious movements among the Puerto Ricans are the Pentecostal and independent Pentecostal-type churches. The 1960 study of the Protestant Council of New York located 240 such churches with an estimated total membership of 25,000—but the Council's estimates are certainly too conservative. These tiny churches generally run services every day of the week. They demand that their people give up smoking and alcohol and fornication. They are completely supported by the membership, and often a church of 100 members will keep a full-time minister. Here, where the preachers and ministers are all Puerto Ricans, if a stranger comes in, he is warmly greeted, and if a member falls sick, he is visited. The tight Pentecostal congregation is one of the most important expressions of community that exists among Puerto Ricans in New York.

Aside from these churches, however, the Puerto Ricans do not have a strong organizational life. To be sure, there are many social organizations, based on place of origin on the island, but they do not have the importance that the early immigrant societies in New York used to have. That they should not is understandable: movies and television and other forms of commercialized recreation have usurped one major function of such societies in the past, while public and private welfare agencies have usurped the other. Moreover, the rise of organization has been inhibited by the same factors (urban renewal, public housing, etc.) that have dispersed the Puerto Rican population throughout the city and prevented the development of a great residential center for the group.

The ways in which the relation to the island affects the organizational life of Puerto Ricans in New York are probably many and subtle, but one clear impact is seen in the role of the Office of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in New York City. This office (maintained by the Department of Labor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico) is for the Puerto Rican community of New York what the NAACP and the National Urban League are for the Negroes. It serves as an employment agency and an orientation center for new migrants; it represents Puerto Ricans and Puerto Rican interests on committees; it helps organize the Puerto Rican community where such organization seems necessary (as for example, in the 1960 campaign to increase registration, in which it took a leading and active role); it is concerned with the public relations of the Puerto Ricans, supplying information and correcting misconceptions.

But it is again a special twist for New York's Puerto Ricans that their equivalent of NAACP and NUL, or of the Jewish community organizational complex, should be a *government* office, supported by *government* funds. That we no longer leave newcomers to New York to sink or swim is undoubtedly a good thing; yet because the Puerto Ricans have been so well supplied with paternalistic guidance by the island government, and with social services by city and private agencies, the group has not been forced to develop powerful grass-roots organizations of its own. Despite (or perhaps because of) this, however, the Puerto Ricans have achieved a sizable degree of success in adjusting to life in New York. Much of this success has been obscured, for adjustment means inconspicuousness and the well-adjusted Puerto Rican is often not seen as a Puerto Rican; he tends to be only someone with a Spanish name. The successful and adjusted withdraw to Washington Heights and two- or one-family houses in the Bronx or Queens. The newcomers, crowding the rooming houses of the West Side and Chelsea, are in some of the busiest sections of the city, with a large and active, previously settled population that is made all too aware of their problems and difficulties.

One important index of success is business, and according to a recent estimate by the Puerto Rican migration division, there are, all told, 4,000 Puerto Rican-run businesses in New York. This is an amazing figure. It is considerably higher, for example, than the much bigger and longer-settled Negro population has achieved, and it suggests that one of the widely accepted reasons for the low participation of Negroes in small

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business—discrimination in loans—is probably not of primary importance. (The Puerto Rican, after all, with his characteristically accented and poor English, would not be likely to impress the banker or supplier any more than a Negro does.) Other factors, like the demand for special items by the group and the bond of language, seem to explain the difference better.

As for Puerto Rican workers, the 1950 census already indicated a remarkable shift upward in the occupational profile of the second generation. In 1950, 37 per cent of Puerto Rican men were semi-skilled operatives (in toy factories, plastics, and the like) and 28 per cent were service workers (porters, elevator operators, kitchen helpers, etc.). For those Puerto Ricans born in this country who were under twenty-four and at work—still a small group, but suggesting the shape of the future—there was a radical decline in these categories and a sharp increase in the sales and clerical category (from 9 per cent for the Puerto Rican-born to 24 per cent for the native born). And the changes among women are even more striking. In 1950, more than four-fifths of young Puerto Rican women migrants were working in factories (mostly clothing factories) and only 7 per cent were in clerical and sales. Among the young native-born, on the other hand, the proportion working as operatives dropped by half, and the number employed in clerical and sales rose to 43 per cent!

For all this, however, it takes no special discernment of eye to see that a great many of the newcomers live in a veritable sea of misery.

As to its extent: Puerto Rican median family income was considerably lower than even non-white median family income—$3,811 as against $4,437—in 1960, and unemployment among Puerto Ricans also seems to be consistently higher than among non-whites. The census of 1950 showed, for men, 7 per cent of the non-Puerto Rican whites, 12 per cent of the Negroes, and 17 per cent of the Puerto Ricans unemployed; for women, 5 per cent of the non-Puerto Rican whites, 8.5 per cent of the Negroes, and 11 per cent of the Puerto Ricans. In 1960, 5 per cent of all New York males, 6.9 per cent of non-white males, and 9.9 per cent of all Puerto Rican males were unemployed.

In explaining misery among the Puerto Ricans, their high birth rate must be taken into account. Puerto Ricans begin bearing children younger, and bear more of them. A 1950 analysis showed that for women between the ages of fifteen and nineteen the Puerto Rican birth rate was about five times the continental white rate (the Negro rate for this age group was almost as high); for women twenty to twenty-four it was almost twice the white rate, and a third higher than the Negro rate.

We see the strain in a number of ways. For example, it is interesting to note how many of the adjusted Puerto Rican families have only one or two children. The job at $50 a week, which manages to support a small family in an apartment in the Bronx and which, compared with the $12-a-week income that was left behind on the island, represents real advancement, is completely inadequate to support five children or more. All problems tend to pile up. The bigger family may not get into a good apartment or a housing project. The crowding in a small apartment may mean more illness and poor management of children. And the difficulty of feeding so many mouths on $50 a week means that welfare has to be called in to help. One-half of all families in New York receiving supplementary assistance from the Department of Welfare are Puerto Ricans; one quarter of all Puerto Rican children in the city are on some form of assistance; and about one-seventh of all Puerto Ricans are on public assistance. The Puerto Rican (especially the Puerto Rican male) is not happy about going on relief; no one is, but it is perhaps even worse for Puerto Ricans since their culture places so high a value on the maintenance of dignity and self-respect.

Everything can contribute to breaking this circle of dependency—more education, more training, fewer children, fewer illnesses, better housing, dedicated social workers, etc., etc. Sometimes, however, at the bottom of the scale, things are too far gone for the circle to be broken. Here are the "multi-problem" families, afflicted simultaneously by a variety of miseries—a child who is a drug-addict, another who is delinquent, a father who is psychologically or

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physically unable to work, or perhaps is not there at all.

One of the greatest misfortunes of this bottom layer of unfortunates who cannot help themselves is the enormous difficulty of managing one of the most complex and ingrown bureaucracies in the world—harried city employees, probation officers, welfare workers, rent administrators, etc., etc., etc. An equal misfortune is the housing situation, which consigns those without sufficient resources and without energy to the frightful one-room furnished dwellings carved out of brownstones and apartment houses principally on the West Side of Manhattan. Better living quarters are available, and at cheaper rents, in the Bronx and Brooklyn, but when one is overwhelmed by so many troubles, the energy to take the subway to look for an unfurnished apartment, to get together the few sticks of furniture and the minimal kitchen equipment (the Welfare Department will pay), is often literally beyond the capacity of many families. And so they migrate dully from one of these awful dwellings to another, scarcely better, a few blocks away. Meanwhile, one generation on relief gives rise to another. The culture of public welfare, which Julius Horowitz has so vividly described in his novel, *The Inhabitants,* is as relevant for the future of Puerto Ricans in the city as the culture of Puerto Rico itself.

And yet despite all this, there was not an exceptionally high rate of delinquency among Puerto Rican children during the 1950's. Today, a good deal of Puerto Rican violence consists of crimes of passion involving members of the community only (though it is not unreasonable to expect that in the future, as the community becomes more and more "Americanized," more and more of this violence will be turned outward). As for that other index of social strain—illness—Puerto Ricans seem to enjoy poorer health than other groups in the population, and their rate of admission to mental hospitals is higher than on the island, or for New Yorkers in general. The migration, it seems, has hit them very hard.

A TYPICAL pattern of migration for families with children is for the father to go alone, stay with relatives or friends, find a job and living quarters, and then gradually bring over the rest of the family. Many families are consequently divided between Puerto Rico and New York, and when they are united, if ever, they show wide differences in degree of knowledge of English, assimilation, and the like. A second pattern of migration involves a woman with children —her husband has deserted her, or she has decided to leave home and go to New York, where jobs are abundant, where the government is reputed to be "for the women and the children," and where relief is plentiful.

The Puerto Rican mother works here much more often than she does in Puerto Rico, but women still tend, if at all possible, to stay home to take care of the children. Fewer of them work than do Negro mothers. The question, then, is what kind of care the children get from these mothers, many of whom have been married since what could be considered childhood. In Puerto Rico, it is perfectly clear how one raises children. The boys are praised for their manliness and aside from being required to act respectfully toward their fathers (whether or not their fathers still live with their mothers), they are left to raise themselves. In radically different fashion, the girls are carefully watched, warned to keep their virginity—without which a proper marriage is inconceivable—and then relatively early they flee from this restrictive and stifling atmosphere into marriage and motherhood.

In New York, however, both traditional patterns raise serious problems. If the boys are left to themselves, they find bad friends, may take to drugs, will learn to be disrespectful and disobedient. And even if a boy survives the streets morally, how is he to survive them physically, with cars and trucks whizzing by, and tough Negro and Italian boys ready to beat him up at the slightest provocation? If the girls are guarded and confined to the home (i.e. a tiny, overcrowded apartment) as proper girls should be, they become resentful at a treatment that their classmates and friends are not subjected to.

Thus the radical boy-girl disjunction does not work in New York City. To the social workers or young ministers in the slums, the dances and other co-educational activities they run are means of teaching young boys and girls how to relate to each other in ways that are not purely sexual and exploitative,

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and perhaps in a measure they do accomplish this. But to the Puerto Rican (and often Negro) parents, what goes on in the settlement houses and the church socials simply looks like a shocking invitation to premature pregnancy.

In this confusing situation there are two possibilities. One is to give up altogether and simply let the children run wild. But a more typical reaction is a tightening of the screws, not only on the girls but on the boys, too. Many cases of disturbed Puerto Rican boys that come to the attention of social agencies are cases of overprotection, anxiety stemming from an exaggerated fear of the dangers of the streets. With the girls, a tightening of discipline makes life seem even more stifling, and there is less chance of escaping into an early marriage here than there is in Puerto Rico. When a social worker suggested to a Puerto Rican girl who had a job and was expected to scurry home from the factory as fast as she had from school, that she ought to get away from the traditionally strict supervision of her father by moving into a residence, the girl was shocked. "She seems to think that in Puerto Rico they would consider any girl who moves away from her family into a residence as someone who goes into a house of prostitution."

The changing city no longer provides the neighborhood that is exclusive to one ethnic group, and so the models for new conduct in rearing one's children vary. There are Negro, Jewish, and Italian models, as well as the "American" models of the welfare workers and the settlement houses. What degree of discipline is proper, what kind of punishment and rewards ought to be enforced, what expectations should one have of one's children? The Puerto Rican mother is at a loss in deciding on the right course.

AND THEN there is the role of the school in the lives of the children. Even the least schooled migrant knows the value of education; Puerto Ricans universally would like to see their children well educated, and hope they will grow up to be professionals. But school is often a frustrating experience. The shift to a new language has been peculiarly difficult for the Puerto Ricans. We can only speculate as to why Jews and Italians, coming into the city at roughly the same ages as the Puerto Ricans have, and with less formal knowledge of English to begin with, should have made a less problematic linguistic adjustment. Certainly the schools did much less to ease their path. (Of course in the years of the heaviest Jewish and Italian migration, the school-leaving age was considerably lower, so that the children who could not learn English got out before their problems became too noticeable.)

Probably no public school system has spent as much money and devoted as much effort to a group of minority children as the New York public school system has devoted to the Puerto Ricans. There are now hundreds of special personnel to deal with parents, to help teachers, to handle the special difficulties of students. The magnitude of the problem is barely communicated by figures. "On October 31, 1958," reports the Board of Education, "of the 558,741 children in our elementary schools, there were 56,296 children of Puerto Rican ancestry whose lack of ability to speak or understand English represented a considerable handicap to learning."

The numbers alone are enormous, and there is the additional problem of the rapid movement of the newcomers. On the West Side of Manhattan—one of the major sections of entry for Puerto Rican migrants—the turnover in an area containing sixteen schools has been 92 per cent, which means that each year the school confronts what is in effect a completely new student body.

It is probably particularly hard for adolescent boys to adjust to this situation, for the Puerto Rican emphasis on masculine dignity makes it embarrassing to speak English with an accent. Meanwhile, there is a good deal of school-leaving at the earliest possible age and relatively small proportions today go into the academic high schools. The register for New York City schools in October 1960 showed that 18 per cent of the elementary-school students, 17 per cent of the junior high-school students, and only 8 per cent of the high-school students were Puerto Rican. The proportion in the academic high schools was 5 per cent.

The other side of the coin is an impressive amount of activity by young, educated Puerto Ricans to raise the level of concern for education in the group. For example,

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Puerto Rican social workers, professionals, and teachers have set up an organization called *Aspira,* which is devoted to helping students and their parents to take all possible advantage of educational opportunities. The young Puerto Rican leaders clearly see Puerto Ricans as following in the path of the earlier ethnic groups; and these leaders speak of the earlier ethnic groups as models for emulation, not as targets for attack. They identify, that is, with the Jews or Italians of forty years ago, rather than with the Negroes of today, and they have a rather hopeful outlook, which stresses the group's potential for achievement rather than the prejudice and discrimination it meets.

New York's folk culture is already deeply affected by the Puerto Rican migration—and in time, one feels sure, its commercial culture will be similarly affected. In every area of Puerto Rican settlement little record stores carry a remarkable variety of Latin American music; the same records, and live music, pour from hundreds of rooms and apartment houses, and from small and large (and even internationally known) dance halls. As the group becomes larger and more self-conscious, the special Puerto Rican passion for music and dancing will cut more and more into the coldness and sharpness of the city. Indeed, the Puerto Ricans in general add to a rather tough and knowing cast of New York characters a new type—softer and milder, gayer and more light-spirited.

But the most significant Puerto Rican contribution to the city of New York, one suspects, will be in the area of attitudes toward color. The Puerto Ricans introduce into the city a group that is intermediate in color, neither all white nor all dark, and they also carry with them a new attitude toward color. There is no strong sense among Puerto Ricans of difference based on color; intermarriage is common, and people are aware of color and hair and facial features as they are aware of any other personal and defining characteristics of an individual. In Puerto Rico, in fact, there seems to be much less concern over color than there is in Jamaica, where subtle distinctions are made in shade, and persons try to marry someone lighter than themselves.

In the 40's, it was widely believed that the Puerto Rican group would eventually split, with the darker members being absorbed into the over-all American Negro community, just as West Indians and other colored immigrants had been. But Father Joseph Fitzpatrick's study of marriage among New York Puerto Ricans reveals that the newcomers still maintain the pattern of a single Puerto Rican community in which people mingle freely in disregard of the color marks that so affect American social behavior. Even more interesting: Father Fitzpatrick's study shows a sizable proportion of marriages between persons of different color; at least a sixth of Puerto Rican marriages in New York are of this type.

The break between colored and white Puerto Ricans, then, has not yet occurred. And if the cancer of color consciousness fails to develop among them, the Puerto Ricans may yet bring a greater gift to New York than any special cultural contribution could ever be.

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MARC GALANTER

A DISSENT ON BROTHER DANIEL

IN DECEMBER, 1962, the Supreme Court of Israel rejected the claim of Brother Daniel, a Polish Jew who had become a Carmelite monk, that he was entitled to be admitted to Israel under the Law of Return. The decision of the Court—together with Brother Daniel's paradoxical identification of himself as a Jew—has brought into sharp focus certain questions of Jewish identity that continue to be vexing both in Israel and throughout the Diaspora.

Brother Daniel, born Oswald Rufeisen, is the son of Polish-Jewish parents. As a boy, he belonged to the Zionist youth movement. After finishing secondary school in 1939, he spent two years on a *hachsharah* training farm preparing for emigration to Palestine. During the Nazi occupation of Poland, he became a hero of the Jewish resistance movement and, in the words of the Court, "rescued hundreds of his fellow Jews from the Gestapo in legendary feats of daring." In 1942, while hiding from the Nazis in a convent, he converted to Roman Catholicism, though continuing to maintain his connections with his family and the Jewish community, and to regard himself as a Jew whose mission was to save other Jews. At the end of the war he joined the Carmelite order in the hope of being transferred from Poland to a Carmelite monastery in Palestine. He received his hoped-for assignment to Israel in 1958, and presented himself to the Polish authorities as a Jew seeking to emigrate to his homeland. Having relinquished his Polish nationality, he was then given the ordinary "Jewish" travel document for emigration to Israel.

Arriving in Israel in 1958, Brother Daniel applied for an identity card in compliance with the Registration of Inhabitants Ordinance of 1949, which requires that every resident of Israel have an identity card with appropriate entries indicating among other things his nationality, religion, and ethnic group. In his application, Brother Daniel listed his religion as Roman Catholic and his ethnic group as Jewish.

At the same time he also applied for an immigration certificate under the 1950 Law of Return, which provides that "every Jew who has expressed his desire to settle in Israel" shall be entitled to do so. The only exceptions are those applicants deemed by the Minister of the Interior to be "engaged in an activity directed against the Jewish people"; to be "likely to endanger the public health or the security of the state"; or to be persons "with a criminal past, likely to endanger public welfare."

The Minister of the Interior requested an opinion from the government on

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Brother Daniel's application, whereupon the government issued a directive stating that a person having another religion could not be registered as a Jew. Brother Daniel then brought suit against the Minister, asking for an order to compel him to grant the certificate and to issue the identity card. By a four to one majority, the Supreme Court, sitting as court of first instance, denied the order on the ground that the word "Jew" in the Law of Return did not include an apostate.* It further held that Brother Daniel was not entitled to an identity card listing "Jewish" as his "ethnic group."

THE COURT WAS careful to indicate that it was not addressing itself to the meaning of the term "Jew" in every possible context or for every conceivable purpose. Its concern was limited to interpreting a specific law and applying it to a specific situation; in other words, simply to deciding whether or not Brother Daniel came within the meaning of the term "Jew" as it appears (undefined) in the Law of Return.

Brother Daniel urged that, notwithstanding his conversion, he was still a Jew according to Jewish religious law. While expressing displeasure—and even revulsion—at his reliance upon the law of the religion he had abandoned, the majority conceded that he did remain a Jew in this sense. However, the Justices unanimously rejected the relevance of religious law in considering the question before them. The term "Jew" in the Law of Return, declared Justice Silberg, "does not refer to the 'Jew' of Jewish religious law, but to the 'Jew' of secular law." Religious law, far from being accepted as binding on the Court, was disregarded even as a source of guidance. In effect, the Court was acknowledging that the religious law supplies only one among several definitions of the term "Jew," and one without any special pre-eminence in this matter.

Where, then, can the prescriptive meaning of "Jew" be found? The majority judges agreed that popular usage offers the proper guide. Justice Silberg spoke of "the normal meaning of the word as used by Jews"; Justice Landau, of the "instinct of the overwhelming majority of Jews today" (as well as of the "philosophy of the founders of Zionism"); Justice Berinson, of "the common meaning of the word" and of "the popular understanding." To invoke the authority of popular usage and common understanding, however, was to assume that the Knesset had intended some single "objective" test of Jewishness. But Justice Cohn, dissenting, urged that the Knesset had left the term undefined precisely so that it would be able to accommodate a variety of subjective meanings.

Once it is supposed that a single "common" meaning exists and can be found, the question arises as to which Jews are to be consulted for their usage and understanding. Israelis? If so, only Jewish Israelis, or, since this is a secular law, all Israelis? The Diaspora as well? Contemporary Jews or those throughout history? The majority seems to have had in mind mainly present-day Israelis; but then one might wonder whether the "everyday" definitions of "Jew" in Israel are sufficiently differentiated to incorporate the many meanings attached to the term in the Diaspora—for it is to Diaspora Jews that the Law of Return applies. Furthermore, even within Israel to-

* The opinion of the Court was delivered by Justice Silberg. Justices Landau and Berinson, concurring, appended their own views in separate opinions. The fourth member of the majority, Justice Many, merely noted his agreement with the Silberg and Landau opinions. Justice Cohn wrote a dissenting opinion. In the following discussion references to the views of "the Court" should be understood as referring either to a consensus among all the opinions or else to views expressed in the Silberg opinion and uncontradicted in the other opinions. References to the views of the "majority" should be understood as referring to a consensus among the three majority opinions or else to views expressed in the Silberg opinion which are not contradicted in either of the concurring opinions.

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day, the word "Jew" is used in a variety of ways. *Which* ordinary usage is the relevant one?

All the Justices acknowledged that Brother Daniel was a Jew according to religious law. Justice Landau conceded that he was still a Jew "in the racial sense." Justice Berinson stated that he remained a Jew ethnically and nationally "according to my own personal sentiments." Justice Cohn regarded him as a Jew because Brother Daniel so regarded himself.

It goes without saying that these overlapping and conflicting notions of Jewish identity are not confined to the Israel Supreme Court; and there is undoubtedly also a similar variety of views both in Israel and the Diaspora as to which notion is most relevant. However, even assuming that a court were able to determine the most commonly acceptable idea of what a Jew is, there would still be great difficulty in transposing such popular usage from everyday contexts to the technical and complex demands of a case as intricate and unusual as Brother Daniel's. Indeed, reliance on usage, if taken seriously, would involve a relinquishment of the judicial responsibility to clarify and enlighten current public sentiment rather than merely to reflect it. The question before the Court, after all, was not what current usage is (i.e., has been) in other contexts, but what it is (i.e., ought to be) in this technical one. Yet, bound by a self-imposed commitment to the common understanding, the Court felt unable to move beyond it. As Justice Berinson said: "I do not think that we judges are entitled to be the first to step out and determine today something which it seems to us is bound to come in the course of time. Law follows life and not life the law."

As its working definition of Jewishness, then—whose derivation was never finally made clear—the Court put forward the idea of identification with the Jewish people and their heritage. All the judges agreed that this tie of identification—of voluntary connectedness with the Jewish past and future—is decisive. All of them rejected blood or descent as the test. Nor, in their view, does this connectedness require adherence to the tenets of Judaism. All agreed that a person might be religious, irreligious, or even actively anti-religious and still be a Jew. It was only beyond this point that the real differences among the members of the Court appeared.

THE MAJORITY CLEARLY find apostasy to be incompatible with the requisite identification. In fact, the lowest common denominator of Jewish understanding of the matter is seen to lie in "the fundamental conception that Jew and Christian are a contradiction in terms." The majority offers two arguments in support of this assertion: first, that the apostate is incapable of fully identifying himself with the Jewish past and destiny; and second, that apostasy leads to intermarriage and eventually to complete assimilation.

The most important of these two arguments is the first. In the words of Justice Silberg:

> Brother Daniel will be a lover of Israel; he has already proved that and I have no doubt of it. But he does so from the outside. He has no part in, and will have no true feeling for, the world of Judaism. His undoubted love for, and even full association with the Jewish society in Israel are no substitute for the absent subjective self-identification.

By conversion, says Justice Landau, "an apostate cuts himself off from his national past," "no longer shares a common fate with the Jewish people," and "erects a barrier against any future identification with the Jewish people. . . ."

There is certainly sufficient evidence for saying in a general way that converts from Judaism usually abandon their connections with the Jewish people and heritage. But Brother Daniel presents the case—perhaps an almost unique one—of a man who not only converted but became a monk, and who nevertheless not only retained his identification with Jews

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and the Jewish fate, but demonstrated the power of that identification by a consistent and heroic course of action. And, indeed, Justice Silberg acknowledges Brother Daniel's strong personal attachment—to say the least—when he mentions "his life's desire . . . to become completely merged with the people he loves. . . ." Similarly, Justice Berinson observes that in the twenty years since his conversion, Brother Daniel "has been consistent in his attitude and in his Jewish consciousness . . . proud of his association, openly proclaiming it at every opportunity. . . . His association with the Jewish people, tempered by suffering and courage rarely encountered even in this generation so sorely tried in suffering and courage . . . is based on consciousness and on faith accompanied by public utterances and deeds, of which the latest is his immigration . . . [to] Israel and his desire to live in it and work for it."

IN APPLYING THE test of Jewish identification and relating it to conversion, the Court had two courses open to it. One was to establish, *as a rule of law,* that being a convert automatically precludes the requisite identification, which would make the particular evidence in Brother Daniel's case irrelevant. The second was for the Court to say that, given the general validity of its view of conversion, any conversion initially raises the *presumption* that Jewish identification is lacking, thus placing upon the convert the burden of proving through the introduction of relevant evidence that he has maintained the necessary ties of connectedness. The majority took the former course, thus in effect avoiding the question of Brother Daniel's Jewish identification. But in making it a rule of law that *no* convert is capable of a Jewish identification, the Court went beyond the necessities of settling the case before it. If, instead, it had treated its generalization about converts as raising a factual presumption, the court could have avoided confirming the legal adage, "hard cases make bad law."

On the other hand, the Court might have accepted Brother Daniel's estimate of his Jewish identity expressed in the declaration accompanying his request for an *oleh's* visa. This "subjective test"—urged by Justice Cohn but rejected by the majority—would have allowed the Court to dispense both with generalizations about converts and with evidence about the Jewish identification of Brother Daniel in particular. If the "subjective test" is objectionable because it reduces the complexities of personal identity to a matter of the individual's volition at a given time, it still avoids the more dubious procedure of applying an objective test as subtle as that propounded by the majority—a test, moreover, that requires the State to discern and evaluate personal qualities by administrative and judicial procedures ill-suited to the task. The subjective test recommends itself, then, not as the most adequate measure of Jewish identity, but at least as one that avoids the necessity for state inquiries into the imponderables of personal identity.

But what of the Court's other line of argument: that apostasy leads to intermarriage and ultimately—since the children of apostates marry members of other faiths—to "complete assimilation"? On close inspection, this assertion turns out to be neither so relevant nor so convincing as it may at first appear—and not only in the case of a monk. For given the fact that certain kinds of assimilation are acceptable to the Court—the exchange of religious commitment for secular humanism or nationalism, for example, troubles the judges not at all—the argument from assimilation becomes in part merely a restatement of the question. Moreover, to say that apostasy *leads to* complete assimilation implies that some attenuated form of identification may persist after conversion. In view of the Court's avowed concern for Jewish survival, it might have been expected, in interpreting the Law of Return, to be guided by policies for

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promoting such survival. Would not the cause of Jewish survival be better served by an interpretation that would encourage converts to express and expand their remaining ties to Jews, than by one taking their conversion as involving a complete foreclosure? And again, if the purposes of the Law include providing refuge and asylum to the persecuted, the term "Jew" might well be thought to embrace Brother Daniel and all those who were subject—or who subjected themselves—to persecution on the ground of their Jewishness.

In addition to all this, the Court's reasoning raises another problem. If conversion is evidence of lack of identification because it leads to assimilation, what then of the less dramatic but perhaps equally potent encouragements to assimilation provided by non-converts? Would the Court be willing to test the Jewishness of the anti-Semitic Jew or the ideologically assimilationist Jew by the degree to which they obstruct and discourage the Jewish identification of their children (or others)? This implicit notion of measuring Jewish identity by effect on other Jews also runs into a textual difficulty that deserves notice. The Law of Return makes provision for the exclusion of those Jews "engaged in an activity directed against the Jewish people. . . ." Presumably systematic anti-Jewish activity would show a lack of voluntary attachment and would also have a deleterious effect on other Jews. Yet it is clear that a person involved in such activity would be included in the term "Jew" as it is used in the Law. A non-convert engaged in systematic anti-Jewish activities remains a Jew; a convert, however well-disposed toward Jews, and whatever contribution he may make to Jewish life, does not.

THOUGH THE Court emphatically declined to set up a positive religious test and emphatically rejected even a modicum of adherence to Judaism as a requirement of Jewishness, its test of identification in the end amounts to a religious disqualification. The nature of the disqualification is explicitly revealed in the treatment of the question of the identity card. The Court holds that, as a member of a non-Jewish religion, Brother Daniel cannot identify himself as a member of the Jewish ethnic group—in spite of the fact that the Registration Ordinance distinguishes between religion and ethnic identification.

To whom, one wonders, does this disqualification apply? Does it derive from the historic hostility to Jews of the church involved, from the formal abjuration of Judaism by the convert, from doctrinal or practical incompatibility with Judaism, or from some combination of these? Justice Landau placed particular weight on the extreme form of Brother Daniel's conversion and on the necessary fealty to his order which prevents him from sharing a common fate with Jews. However, the majority's reasoning appears to apply with equal force to any Roman Catholic and probably to any Christian. Would the disqualification also extend to Quakers? To Unitarians? To non-Christian Unitarians? Presumably it would extend to Islam—and to any other faith that shares with Judaism and Christianity a jealous regard for the exclusive allegiance of its members. Islam, like Christianity, has been doctrinally hostile to Jews, if notably more tolerant in practice. It is unclear what would happen to the Jew who embraced a religion like Buddhism or Hinduism, which has no historic antipathy to Jews or Judaism, which does not require the renunciation of previous religious commitments, and which does not require a formal act of conversion. Justice Berinson suggests that if Brother Daniel "announced that he believed in the teachings of the Buddha, teachings which do not require a change of religion, he would apparently be recognized as a Jew." The other majority judges, who stress the historic antipathy of the Roman Catholic Church to Jews, might possibly reach the same conclusion.

But the majority's religious disqualifi-

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cation is not derived solely from empirical generalizations about converts. Ultimately it rests on the theory that Jewishness and Christianity are incompatible. And this theory—strongly felt by the majority and rejected by Justice Cohn—rests in turn upon a certain conception of the nature of historical continuity and a view of the nature of personal identity. When the Court says we cannot sever ourselves from our heritage, the heritage it is referring to is a selective and, inevitably, distorted product of the judges' own notions of the character of Jewish existence. According to these notions, secularism and irreligion do not violate historical continuity, but a failure to hold oneself entirely apart from Christianity does. To permit a Christian to be a Jew would, says the majority:

> . . . expunge the historic . . . meaning of the word "Jew" . . . renounce all those spiritual values for which we have been martyred throughout the different periods of our long exile up to this day. The glorious memory of our martyrs of the Middle Ages will fade away to nothing, and our history will lose its continuity and begin its annals only with the emancipation which followed the French Revolution.

This peculiar selectivity about the past is disconcerting. For one thing, it tends to visualize all of Jewish history in relation to Christianity. The repeated references to the historical antagonism of Christianity toward Judaism suggest that an intransigent response to this antagonism is an essential—perhaps *the* essential—component of Jewishness. Secondly, there is a type of masochistic bias here which tends to define the past exclusively in terms of suffering, persecution, and martyrdom. The love of learning, the thirst for justice, the attachment to reason and law—all of these are passed by without mention. The emphasis on suffering—especially at the hands of the Roman Catholic Church—works a kind of estoppel against the convert's claim. By conversion he has joined the other side. However well-disposed, he has identified himself retrospectively with inquisitors and oppressors and disqualified himself from the brotherhood of Jewish suffering. In the majority view, then, the primary thing that one must do to remain a Jew is to resist resolutely the blandishments of Christianity; the mission of all Jews is to bear witness, if not to the validity of Judaism, then at least to the injustices of Christianity.

THUS OUR connection with our heritage demands that we resist Christian pretensions in even the benign and dedicated person of Brother Daniel. Continuity must be guided along the lines laid out by "history":

> Only a simpleton believes or thinks that we are creating a *new* culture here. It is too late for that! . . . Our new culture in Israel will, even in the most extreme case, be no more than a new edition of the culture of our past.

In contrast, Justice Cohn views the establishment of the State of Israel as a decisive historic break that enables us to re-evaluate our experience and to recognize change. The Jews themselves have "become a nation like all other nations. . . . This revolutionary event demands a change in values and in attitude, a revision of our *galut* thinking." The Church itself is "no longer, either in theory or practice, an enemy of the Jewish people."

To the majority, history has already been witness to all the valid categories of personal identity and affiliation; and it is these categories which must guide our notion of continuity. For Justice Cohn, on the other hand, there may be new possibilities of identity and of human connection. In shaping the future we may invoke, not only the categories established in the past, but our own experiences and aspirations. Indeed, "the imperative of historical continuity is to *build* on foundations laid in the past, to add stone on stone, to innovate and to progress, not to stagnate."

But the majority's assumption of the fundamental incompatability of Christian

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belief and Jewishness follows from something more than its subservience to selected aspects of the past; it also comes from the desire to establish and certify some objective boundaries to the concept of Jewishness. Justice Cohn, by contrast, is willing to accept that Jewishness is open to the wide variety of interpretations offered by particular Jews.

In trying to answer the questions about personal identity raised by these differences, it is probably best to begin by recognizing that no single criterion exists that works to separate Jews from non-Jews; "the Jews" are an entity comprising a number of overlapping groups. First, there are those who adhere to Judaism, or the Jewish religion, in its several forms (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, "Ethiopian Jews," Karaites, etc.). Second, there are those who may be called "ethnic Jews" —members of communities recognized to be Jewish, such as the "Yiddish" communities of Eastern Europe, the Sephardic communities of the Mediterranean, the B'nai Israel of India. All these communities have contained members who adhere to one or another of the forms of Judaism, as well as members who were either indifferent to Judaism or actively secularist. If, then, ethnic ties have often coincided with religious ones, they have also served as the primary or even exclusive basis of Jewish identification—as they certainly did, for instance, for large numbers of East European Jews. Finally, there are the Israelis, as well as Zionists outside Israel, whose identification with the Jewish people is primarily political.

How could any single standard—religious, ethnic, or political—encompass everyone who belongs to these overlapping but distinct groups? A religious standard would exclude a significant portion of the American and Israeli Jewish communities. An ethnic standard would inevitably be defeated by the diversity of cultures within the Jewish fold. And as for the national standard—commitment to membership in the Jewish nation—it is rejected not only by many adherents of Judaism (e.g., the American Council for Judaism, the Neturei Karta) but even by many ethnic Jews.

IF THERE is no single set of contemporary beliefs, customs, or allegiances which unifies all these groups, neither is there any ancient or intimate historical connection between them. The only thing they have in common is some historical connection to Judaism and its practitioners—whether as fellow believers, cultural forebears, or fellow citizens. In this limited sense Judaism provides the central core of Jewish identity—not because it prescribes the boundaries of Jewishness in the present, but because it serves as a kind of historical linchpin transecting the different Jewish groups at their point of overlap.

A Jew, then, is a person who has some connection with a history that presents the problems of cosmic design and human destiny in terms of the God of Jewish tradition. According to the Court, he may either affirm this design and destiny and be a religious Jew, or he may reject it and be a secular Jew. Suppose, however, that he not only rejects Judaism but accepts the answers formulated in another religious tradition? Here, the majority would draw the line. Typically, those who have for various reasons embraced other religions have forsaken—or worse—their affiliations with Jews. But there are individuals who defy this pattern, and there are some religious traditions which bear no historic antagonism, in doctrine or in practice, to Jews. Such marginal cases, then, present us with a choice: to cultivate a toleration for the farthest and most precarious reaches of Jewish identity or to attempt to circumscribe and regularize it.

This choice comes to the Court as involving the relative weight to be given to individual volition on the one hand and to group acceptance and consensus on the other. Even if one rejects Justice Cohn's total reliance on the individual's own voli-

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tion, it is not necessary to accept the majority's assertion that the criteria of Jewishness need be acceptable to all Jews. Would not acceptability to some Jews suffice? The emphasis on a common denominator is disquieting, for no common denominator could include everything that may be thought of as distinctively and valuably Jewish.

BOTH RELIGIOUS Jews and Zionists acknowledge that there are in fact other kinds of Jews, but they tend to see them as a transient phenomenon—a mere penumbra around the true center of Jewishness (be that Judaism or Israel) destined either to be re-absorbed or lost through assimilation. They seek to end this cultural dispersion by an ingathering of all Jews within the spiritual homeland of Judaism or the national home of Israel. But if the diffuse and plural—polycentric is perhaps the better word—character of Jewishness is viewed not as a problem to be overcome, but as a resource to be cultivated, "Jewish survival" becomes a matter not of bringing everyone together into a single category, but of accepting many styles of being a Jew (including some which are not yet articulated) and of encouraging mutual toleration, respect, and support among all the different kinds of Jews.

It should be clear that this polycentric view does not imply an endorsement of "assimilation." On the contrary, it assumes that a man must have the moral and intellectual courage to be his own kind of minority: ultimately he must choose not only to be a Jew but also what it should mean to be a Jew, acting on his own definition of his experience rather than allowing himself to be herded along —or to be excluded—by those who speak in the name of their own exclusive patent on Jewish survival. One must always remember that what is distinctive in the Jewishness one seeks to preserve is no homogeneous blend of characteristics, but a varied, uneven, and sometimes conflicting and uneasy combination of elements. The reasons that impel us to resist the pressure to blend indistinguishably with the outer world should also impel us to resist those pressures which would smooth over and abolish all internal differences.

We must recognize the permanence—insofar as anything is permanent—of our spiritual dispersion; there is not likely to be any final ingathering in this world. Religious beliefs and practices, ethnic traits and national loyalties, may rise or fall in favor and fortune. The fate of Jewishness does not lie exclusively with any one of them. The Jews have developed an identity much richer than a religion, a nation, or a culture—a kind of brotherhood through history that crosses unprecedented barriers. Jewish history, by its rich and complex patterns of religious, cultural, and national experience, has made of Jewishness a thing *sui generis*. No one Jew or group of Jews is able to partake of all of it. The complexities of this heritage should not be reduced to the more manageable and presentable dimensions of nationality or religion, but should be kept open to the complexities of our changing experience—including the enrichments offered by such Jews as Brother Daniel.

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A. H. RASKIN

THE OBSOLESCENT UNIONS

AMERICAN UNIONISM, thirty years after the New Deal, is in the grip of two contradictory developments. One of these is a new surge of social and economic inventiveness in adapting collective bargaining to the dizzying requirements of rapid technological change. The other is a conjunction of challenges so inimical in their total effect to the traditional structure of our unions, that they presage nothing less than the eventual disappearance of unions as we know them. The historians of American institutions may record this as a period in which the labor movement was innovating itself into the grave.

On the face of it, labor has never seemed stronger—nor more likely to stay strong. Total membership, to take the most obvious measure, is as high as it has ever been, maintaining a level of slightly over 18 million in most of the period since World War II. True, membership is not growing; and the increase in the number of civilian workers—now exceeding 70 million—has reduced the unions' percentage of the total labor force. Nevertheless, inroads into union strength made by technological innovation in such fields as mining and manufacturing have thus far been counterbalanced by sufficient expansion in other fields to keep the numerical level from going down.

The reserves in employee pension and welfare funds are increasing by $5 billion a year, and unions are still showing a high degree of ingenuity in broadening the range of fringe benefits. Thirty thousand workers in the two biggest can companies, for example, are now assured of three months of paid vacation every five years, in addition to their regular annual rest periods. Short-week benefits in auto and steel have put a more dependable floor under weekly earnings. Supplemental unemployment payments have helped bolster yearly earnings. The unions' own treasuries and strike funds are at record levels—a prosperity attested to by the glittering new headquarters that internationals and their locals are putting up in Washington, New York, and every other large city.

Then, too, there is the notable development of joint labor-management committees meeting all year round to look for solutions to the complicated manpower problems created by all the new technological advances. Such committees now function in industries—steel, automobiles, rubber, electrical manufacturing, meatpacking, construction, coal, and others—where once the idea of cooperative decision-making would have been anathema.

It is still too early to judge the effectiveness of this kind of experimentation, but certain useful devices have already been hit on for giving workers a stake in increased productivity and thus encouraging

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them to welcome change, instead of fighting it. The progress-sharing formula developed by the Kaiser Steel Corporation and the United Steelworkers of America is one such device. Through it the union's members at the Kaiser mill in Fontana, California, get a monthly bonus equal to roughly one-third of all the savings in production costs that accrue to the company from automation, economies in materials and supplies, higher individual productivity, or any other factor. The workers also are guaranteed that no one at Fontana will lose his job as a result of the introduction of more efficient machinery; any shrinkage in total manpower needs will be handled through normal attrition—retirements, deaths, and voluntary quittings.

Finally, to round off the picture of labor's apparent vigor, there is its firmly established cachet. Three times within the last few months, President Kennedy has invited twenty or thirty top unionists to the White House for lunch. Few state dinners are given without several labor leaders and their wives mingling with the ambassadors, Cabinet officers, and other dignitaries. Arthur J. Goldberg, only two-and-a-half years ago special counsel to the AFL-CIO, has already moved from Secretary of Labor to Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. Labor is represented on almost every advisory or administrative body created by the President—whether to evaluate foreign aid, to foster culture, or to operate communications satellites in space. Labor-endorsed candidates hold positions of prominence in Congress, in state capitols, and in city halls across the country.

FOR ALL THIS, however, labor organization in the United States—at least in its present form—is being hurled inexorably into obsolescence. The nature of work is changing; the frustrations of work are changing; the need for work is changing. Out of these changes comes the ironic likelihood that in a period when unions are turning most of their attention to easing the impact of automation on their members, the labor movement itself may become technology's most spectacular victim. For, despite all its accomplishments and its very solid acceptance as a fact of American life, the present situation, not only of the work force but of foreign and domestic trade and of public attitudes toward strikes and wage policies, is one in which all roads seem to lead downhill for unionism. Whether labor pursues policies that can be called "responsible," or ones that are "irresponsible," the outlook is pretty much the same: a withering of union strength and influence. The process will be neither swift nor dramatic, but unless the labor movement can arrive at a drastic reassessment of its function, it appears inevitable.

The first and simplest problem facing the unions is the erosion of membership resulting from automation and other technological advances in their traditional strongholds—factories, coal mines, and railroads. With the American miner now able to dig seven times as much coal as his European counterpart, the number of men in our mechanized mines has gone down from 700,000 to 150,000; it takes only 700,000 workers to run a railway network that once gave jobs to nearly three times that many; manufacturing employed a million fewer production workers last year than it did a half-dozen years earlier, yet turned out 20 per cent more goods. In 1947 more than half the country's workers were engaged in production; today service workers outnumber those in production by a ratio of nearly three to two.

The simple arithmetic threat to membership here is further complicated by the fact that blue-collar workers are more and more being replaced by engineers, technicians, and white-collar workers—groups for whom unions have thus far been unable to exercise a strong appeal. And though the unions have begun to tap such new sources of membership as civil service employees, teachers, and retail clerks, there is little sign that over the long

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haul these sources will provide a sufficiently large new influx to balance the loss of manual workers. To make the outlook gloomier, some reasonably informed people are now predicting that in twenty years' time only a handful of workers will be needed to produce all the nation's goods.

ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT factor in the diminution of union strength is the decline of the strike as an effective bargaining tool. Such a statement may appear ludicrous in a year that has already witnessed a five-week tie-up of all Atlantic and Gulf ports, a sixteen-week shutdown of the New York newspapers, an even longer press blackout in Cleveland, two Taft-Hartley national emergency injunctions in the aerospace industry, and the still unremoved threat of a nationwide rail stoppage over the size of train crews. But the fact remains that automation is making certain industries totally invulnerable to strikes; certain others have so much surplus capacity that strikes, far from threatening damage, provide a handy opportunity for management to unload burdensome inventories; and still other industries perform services of such crucial public importance that even the White House has felt called upon to characterize strikes against them as "unacceptable exercises of an undeniable right."

When push buttons regulate every operation from the receipt of raw materials to the loading of finished products, a tiny crew of non-union supervisors and clerks will be able to keep acres of machines running in the face of a total union walkout. Already, the Bell telephone system and most big electric utilities have reached such a point of immunity to strike harassment. And so have the giant oil refineries. The list will grow longer with each major forward thrust in automation.

In steel, factors of public and political pressure are now operating to inhibit further use of the strike. This is an industry that has suffered six national strikes since World War II. From 1946 until 1958 prices and wages in steel raced upward far faster than those in any other major industry.* But the upshot of this blissful conspiracy between labor and management to pick the public's pocket was a virtual ultimatum from President Eisenhower and Congress in 1959 for a non-inflationary labor agreement: after which, it took a 116-day strike, a Taft-Hartley injunction, and some arm-twisting by Vice President Nixon to reach the kind of agreement that Eisenhower had demanded —mostly because management had quixotically committed itself to forcing a wholesale change in union work rules.

One result of this strike was the discovery that the United States could satisfy all its steel requirements, even in a year of high-level industrial activity, with 85 per cent of its steel capacity shut down for nearly four months. The excess of capacity over demand was so great that, within six months after the mills reopened under a presidential order, the companies voluntarily blacked out half their furnaces and furloughed tens of thousands of workers because they did not have enough business to keep them on the job. Thus the union is now faced with a new interplay of forces that serves to restrain it from pressing for the kind of wage increases that it had become accustomed to in the first postwar decade.

Under President Kennedy, wage-price maneuvering in steel has undergone a series of baffling new convolutions. Last year, after considerable pressure from the administration to hold the line, the union agreed to a modest package of job-security benefits three months before its strike deadline. When the industry followed with higher prices, the President and the union both considered themselves to have been double-crossed; and the violence of Kennedy's reaction brought about a quick reversal on the part of Big Steel.

* For an illuminating description of this process, see Daniel Bell's "The Subversion of Collective Bargaining," COMMENTARY, March 1960.

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This year—for the first time since V-J Day—the steel companies put price increases into effect even before they sat down to the bargaining table. The union, which had been under strong pressure from both the industry and the administration to pass up any demand for a 1963 increase in labor costs, thus felt no further hesitancy about asking for more. But the horizons of union expectancy were still far narrower than any it would have deemed tolerable in the inflationary surge of the immediate postwar period. What the steel producers used to call wage-push inflation is now operating in reverse, with the union looking to the industry to make the first move. The wage-price spiral has become a price-wage spiral, but the White House holds a check-rein over any exuberant upward trend on either side of the equation.

AN EVEN BETTER example of the delicate position unions now find themselves in with respect to strikes and wages is to be found in the tangled contract negotiations of the last twelve months between the United Auto Workers and the International Association of Machinists on the one side and the major manufacturers of missiles and spacecraft on the other. The two unions argued that their members had been shortchanged on past wage increases because they knew they could not strike without impairing the defense effort. They asked for compensatory increases over and above the 3 per cent normal limit set by the administration's anti-inflation measures. Special presidential fact-finders rejected any increases in excess of the normal 3 per cent, but recommended elections to determine the union's right to a union shop. With a two-thirds vote needed to win, the unions lost three elections and won one. At Boeing, where they won, so many complications developed that a pact finally accepted by the union negotiators was rejected by the rank and file. The dispute dragged on in an atmosphere of high mutual irritation until renewed White House pressure produced a slightly improved management offer for submission to the membership. The rebellion at Boeing was merely the latest in a series of indications union members have given recently of dissatisfaction with the fruits of collective bargaining, 1963 style.

In all disputes thought to affect the national interest, the administration's policy about whether or not to intervene can be characterized as one of improvisation. Justice Goldberg, during his twenty months as Secretary of Labor, defined the term "national interest" so inclusively, that it came to cover everything from missile bases to a hot dog vendors' picket line outside the Washington baseball stadium on the day President Kennedy was scheduled to throw out the first ball this spring. And federal intervention started at the top, with the President or the Secretary of Labor: barring a direct settlement, there was constant pressure for arbitration. Now Secretary Wirtz is devoting most of his efforts to getting the Department of Labor out of the strike business. However, given the tradition he has inherited from his predecessor and the presence of an activist in the White House, he has so far not been notably successful in this endeavor.

Where long strikes do occur, as in the case of the New York newspapers, the result is usually to confirm what both sides knew before the strike—namely, that the balance of economic power is now so even that neither can bring the other to its knees, no matter how long the tie-up lasts. The result is an eventual accommodation on terms virtually identical with those an arbitrator or fact-finding panel might have been expected to recommend without any suspension of work. This was about how the New York newspaper strike ended. On the issue of wages, the sharing of savings attributable to automation and the fixing of a single expiration date for all newspaper union contracts, the terms Mayor Wagner proposed after three months of strike were not much different from those he might have put forward

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the night before the walk-out began. The real difference was that neither side would have accepted the terms without the pointless economic blood-letting.

FOR THOSE workers who still tend to regard their unions as a kind of slot machine—into which they deposit their dues and then duly extract regular wage increases—the rewards of membership are not nearly so substantial as they were in the immediate postwar period when wages and prices were spiraling throughout the economy. A serious damper has now been put on wage gains by the combined effects of unemployment, public concern about inflation, and the squeeze on many industries themselves from increased overseas and domestic competition.

Even before the White House officially established the policy of gearing higher wage and fringe benefits to the basic annual rise of roughly 3 per cent in national productivity, such a standard had officially come to be used in many sectors of the economy as a guide to non-inflationary increases. The initial push came from the General Motors–United Auto Workers contract in 1948, which had been designed to put more science into wage determination. The contract contained two new features—both by now basic elements in all G.M. contracts. One was an annual improvement provision, under which the workers would get an increase based on the over-all expansion in national productivity. The other was a cost-of-living escalator, intended to keep higher prices from swallowing up any of the improvement.

Neither the G.M. formula nor the Kennedy guidelines that descend from it operate with slide-rule exactness. Yet both substitute a mechanized measurement for the customary interplay of economics, personality, and muscle in collective bargaining. To the extent that these mechanistic standards become institutionalized in the bargaining process, they take most of the excitement and all of the surprise out of it. Inevitably, their long-term application will make the outcome of bargaining so predictable that workers are bound to ask why they need a bargaining committee at all—why a computer could not represent them just as satisfactorily.

This may become even more true if the kind of progress-sharing plan that has just been developed at Kaiser should be widely accepted. Under this plan, the Kaiser workers get 32½ cents of every dollar that the company saves in production costs. This figure represents exactly the proportion of labor costs to the total costs at the Fontana plant. In high-payroll industries, the proportion might be as much as 65 or 70 cents of every dollar, while in low-payroll industries, it might be 10 cents or less. The ratio once established, however, is permanently fixed. It remains, then, merely to calculate the savings—a job for which a computer is ideally adapted. Indeed, the authors of the Kaiser formula acknowledge that it would not work at all if there were not electronic brains to carry out the myriad computations swiftly enough to permit a monthly payoff.*

Actually, however, much of the bargaining process these days is centered on measures to enhance job security, not on how much more money is to go into pay envelopes. It is coming to be understood that the quest for better methods to protect workers from the adverse effects of automation requires more time and far more evenness of mind and temper than negotiators can give it under the club of a strike deadline. That is why it is being ever more widely proposed that unions and employers should designate joint committees to meet at frequent intervals and discuss mutual problems. The lists of problems and the approaches to them are naturally as varied as the industries and

* These observations are not intended to denigrate the Kaiser formula as an expression of labor-management ingenuity in dividing automation's gains. Their purpose is to indicate how the most inventive adjustments can tend to become strait-jackets.

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unions involved. The joint committees of Kaiser, Armour, and a few other companies invite outside experts to sit with them as representatives of the public, while the major companies in steel and automobiles have ruled out all third parties.

The main function of all the committees is to establish certain agreed-upon factual bases for bargaining so that in the tightening atmosphere of an expiring contract the negotiating table will not collapse under the weight of problems too big for hurried appraisal. The difficulty is that some of the problems automation raises for these committees are too vast and ramified to be solved within a particular company or industry, even with the greatest will to cooperation between management and labor. At Armour, for instance, union representatives have time and again come almost to the point of quitting the committee because too few jobs are available for meat workers displaced when the company decides to close a packing house. Retraining and transfer options are meaningless if there are no jobs in Armour or in the general community for which the uprooted workers can qualify.

IN GENERAL, automation presents the kind of problems to the unions that puts them as members of joint committees into an almost impossible position. For either they share in presiding over the outright dismissal of workers, or, if the displacement rate is low enough, their role is to protect the individual worker while the total reservoir of jobs dries up. In either case, the union leader willy-nilly becomes a partner in the liquidation of his own empire.

No union leader can buttress his popularity by exacting a high price for the sale of his members' jobs. A severance pay allowance of $4,000 or $5,000 is a poor substitute for a regular pay check, even taking into account the anxiety that constantly pursues the hourly-rated worker forced to swing with the demand cycle in the mass production industries. Retraining benefits, too, offer him little protection: such things as age, limited literacy, and grossly inadequate information about what and where new skills are needed make retraining a mockery for many workers.

So long as the national unemployment rate stays above 5½ per cent, as it has now for more than five years, union members will continue to view every forced curtailment with dread and to bear a grudge against every union leader who agrees to a shakeout plan. The story of coal is graphic: John L. Lewis recognized many years ago that there would be no coal industry and no jobs if his United Mine Workers did not go all-out to foster mechanization and make coal competitive with oil and natural gas. Lewis succeeded so well that the coal operators he once fought in bloody industry-wide strikes now salute him as the industry's savior. But the price of salvation has been the forcing out of more than 300,000 miners in the last fifteen years. They huddle with their families in the ghostly towns surrounding the abandoned mine tipples in West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and other coal states. And they curse the union they helped to build, as they scratch out subsistence at non-union "dog holes" where there are no welfare royalties and the pay is half the union scale.

Because of what happened in coal, many other unions are adamant about demanding guarantees that any manpower savings brought about by technological innovation will be effected through normal attrition and not mandatory layoffs. The steel union would not even begin to discuss the progress-sharing formula with Kaiser until it had received such an assurance from the company. The fact that the Fontana plant has a regular annual drop-off of more than 8 per cent as a result of retirement, voluntary resignation, or death made it easy for management to agree; automation is not expected to shrink the size of the work force at a greater pace than that anyway.

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But arrangements of this kind, consoling as they are for workers already on the job, offer nothing to the huge wave of youngsters now attempting to enter the job market. The man with a job is protected, even if he must be transferred to another job. The youth without a job finds the "keep out" sign more firmly in place than ever. The young are coming out of school to seek work at a rate that makes it necessary for us to create 25,000 new jobs every week for the next ten years, without any allowance for the jobs being wiped out by technological change or for those needed to sop up the 4 million already idle.

These young workers have no memories of the depression, of the sit-down strikes or of company goons and yellow-dog contracts. Their image of unions was formed largely by three years of televised testimony before the McClellan Committee on the seamier side of labor-management relations. To this image is now being added a conviction that union seniority systems and attrition programs for dealing with automation are conspiratorial devices foisted on industry by labor organizations, whose sole concern is to guard the vested rights of their own dues-payers.

There is an equally intense hostility to the unions among many Negroes and other victims of racial or religious discrimination—among those Negroes, for instance, who have never been able to break into either the building or printing trades. Now their demands for equal treatment have not only the encrusted prejudices of fifty years or more to overcome, but the additional resistance of many craft unionists that results from the growing obsolescence of their own particular manual skills.

All of the above problems—the demise of the strike; increased mechanization of bargaining; increased bureaucratization of the work process itself; automation and unemployment—will require for even their proximate solution a degree of political commitment American labor has never shown. They demand that politics become a principal business of unions, not a haphazard adjunct of their narrowly economic purposes. This is a difficult, perhaps impossible readjustment for a movement that has always prided itself on its abhorrence of ideology. Even in Great Britain, where class lines are more sharply drawn and where the Labor Party has an excellent chance of recapturing power in the next election, the unions are not really the party's dominant element in policy or purpose.

American unions, which will be more and more compelled to move away from their blue-collar identification if they are to appeal successfully to industry's newcomers, are already conscious of the need for more direct involvement in community affairs; they know they must do more in education, health, recreation, and philanthropy. But they lack conviction and direction. Their programs for securing the public weal are as lackluster, and offered as perfunctorily, as those that the administration keeps shoveling into the Congressional hoppers: looking forward to all the right things, but with no real expectation that anyone will pay attention. Labor's stock refrain is that it is for everything the President wants in order to stimulate the economy, only that the President's bills do not go far enough.

When union leaders come to the White House, they are docile guests. I asked one labor participant in a recent presidential luncheon whether any of the unionists had told Mr. Kennedy he was not doing enough about the unemployed. "Oh, we didn't have to tell him," was the bland reply. "He told us. He said the real problem in America was not balancing the fiscal budget but balancing the human budget." And with that problem tidily wrapped up, everybody went on a personally guided tour of the White House upstairs. They all left confirmed in their opinion that the United States had a great President.

But the President's own estimates of

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the unemployment situation are far from optimistic. On the contrary, the administration expects that there will be a gradual increase in joblessness this year; and no one has any real idea when, if ever, the unemployment rate will recede to the 4 per cent level that the President has set as his "interim" goal for full employment. Labor's own target of a 2½ per cent rate is not even discussed in White House circles.

The democratic countries of Western Europe are a generation ahead of us in government policies for promoting full employment, influencing plant location, and assisting workers in their search for new jobs. Yet even their policies are inadequate for meeting the challenges of our technological revolution.

Clearly, the United States will never move into an era of abundance without a great deal more planning for the effective use of our manpower and material resources. Equally clearly, the disposition in Congress is to fight anything that smacks of planning. Labor's big task, for its own survival and the country's good, is to mobilize grass-roots political sentiment in favor of greater federal responsibility for full production, full distribution, and full employment.

If workers are to give ungrudging acceptance to the idea that the total welfare requires maximum mechanization, they will want assurance that the country knows what to do with the fruits of this increased efficiency. Such assurance demands an economic general staff representing all elements in the population and administering a program aimed at the balanced and sustained development of high levels of public and private activity. The chances for eradicating poverty and joblessness would be vastly better with such a program than they can possibly be if we continue to rely on the notion that tens of thousands of corporate and individual decisions, each predicated on what is good for the business, will automatically add up to full protection for the national economy.

LABOR HAS NO more urgent job in the 60's than the focusing of its political energies on the conquest of want, illiteracy, intolerance; the building up of both health and decent housing; the realization of the limitless promise of this scientific Golden Age. And apart from their general social necessity, these undertakings would be vastly more inspiriting, to union membership and leadership alike, than the present ever more routine function in the policing of day-to-day plant grievances and the writing of mechanized contracts.

Labor thus far has only one basic answer for joblessness, a shorter work week—and this at a time when two-fifths of our own people are classed as living below minimum standards of decency, and want is endemic in most parts of the world. This is a policy of despair. Until we at least make a stab at abundance, we should not settle for a policy of sharing the misery. What is needed from labor is a degree of independent leadership that will give vitality to the concept of direct political action for jobs and an expanding economy.

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JEROME CHARYN

ON SECOND AVENUE

A Story

YOU SHOULD have a son like I have a son! And then you would know. "Irving," I say to him, "Irving, you're a lawyer, a big shot. To you they will listen." But go talk to a stone. "Pop," he says, "Pop, the building is being condemned. So what can I do?"

"Do?" And right away I raise one eyebrow. I always do that when I want attention. That's my trade. I'm an actor, on the stage and off. "Do? You can do plenty."

And then he begins to moan. All right, they say he's a genius in court, but let me tell you, I never saw such a weakling in all my life. After all, I should know. I'm his father, no?

"Pop, Pop, even a special decree from the President couldn't save this house. The building is being condemned, that's final. There's rats on every floor. The toilets never work. Every time it rains there's a flood. Pop? Please."

"No. I'm not moving out. You shouldn't ask me again."

"Pop, how will it look when I run for the Assembly with my father in jail?"

"So save the house! Irving, have a heart. For fifty years already I'm living on Second Avenue. Now I should move out?" I'm ready to put on a performance for Irving, and I start to take out my handkerchief, but I figure to myself that maybe it's better to wait and save the tears for later. "Irving, how will I be able to face anybody? Don't worry, I told them, my Irving will save the house. He's a champion. Let them send a hundred Goliaths after us. Irving will win. So what should I tell them now? You backed off without a fight? Irving, where will Tillie Moskowitz go? Who will take her in? Or Mendel or Morris or the others? It's a trick, Irving. Farbstein wants only to raise the rent. Speak to him. He's afraid of you. He knows if you catch him in court it's the end for him. Buy him off, who cares!"

"Pop, please, who has time? I have to be in court. Are you moving out or not?"

"No!" I can see the situation is getting a little dangerous, and I figure to myself that now is the time to act. So I take out my handkerchief, count to three, and start to cry. "Go raise sons! So they can throw you over in your old age. Only God knows!"

But my little exhibition is interrupted by Farbstein himself. You can spot him for a landlord even from a mile away. Here he is with his wrinkled collar and his dirty hands and the little black book that he carries with him wherever he goes.

Me he ignores, but to Irving he walks over and says hello. And I can see right away that something is wrong. When Farbstein doesn't curse or threaten you, then you know you're in trouble. "*Nu?*" he says to Irving, "Any progress?" And I'm waiting for Irving to give it to him, but Irving shrugs his shoulders and doesn't say a word. And now I know the story. Farbstein bought Irving off. A son should sell out his own father, this I never heard!

Farbstein smells victory right away. But I can see, he's still a little worried. Irving maybe he can buy off, but not me! "Yankel," he warns me, "I have two policemen waiting outside." He shows me with his fingers. "Two." And then he motions to Irving. "Tell him, Irving, the law is the law." And

JEROME CHARYN'S story, "Faigele the Idiotke," appeared in our March 1963 number. The present piece has been adapted from a novel-in-progress, to be published by McGraw-Hill.

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Irving is too ashamed even to look me in the face. "Pop," he says, "Pop."

"Yankel," Farbstein says, "I don't want any trouble, you hear? You're the ringleader. When they see you move out, then they'll all move out. I'm giving you three hours. Irving is my witness. And then I'm sending for the two policemen, Yankel."

"Farbstein," I say, "when did I ever give you permission to call me by my first name, heh?" And then I move a step away from him. "Even the rats and the roaches here hate your guts."

"Irving," he says, "do I have to stand for insults? And in my own house yet. Three hours, Irving, that's all. And then out he goes." Farbstein opens his black book, writes down two or three words with a greasy pencil, and then he walks out.

"Pop," Irving says, slapping his sides.

I don't answer him even. "Pop," he says three more times. I don't say a word. Then he slaps his sides again.

And now I'm ready to give it to him. "Stooge!" Irving steps back a little. "Stooge!" It's worse than a slap in the face. "I said it and I mean it. Stooge. Skunk. *Schlemiel.* There isn't a name you don't deserve."

He takes out his handkerchief and starts wiping his face. It happens every time. Whenever Irving is in trouble, right away he reaches for his handkerchief. "Pop."

"Walk away from me, Irving. From this moment on I'm disowning you." Sure, it's easy to say. I haven't got a dime to my name. And without Irving I wouldn't be able to stay alive for a week. But I say it again. "Irving, you're no more my son."

His whole face begins to crumple up like a prune. I feel sorry for him myself.

"Pop, please. I'm running for the Assembly. Farbstein knows all the District leaders. What can I do? The building is being condemned. Pop, you want me to lose the election? Pop?"

"Irving, don't beg. Elections, elections. Irving, you used to be Samson. Look at you now, you're nothing but a shrimp. Farbstein you picked out for a partner yet. You used to spit on people like that. All right, win your election. Yankel's moving out!"

"Pop," he says, "you won't be sorry. And the place I picked out for you, Pop, you'll kiss me for it."

"I said I'm moving out, but from me, Irving, don't expect any kisses."

"You'll see, Pop, you'll see. I'll be back before five." And then he straightens out his tie, picks up his briefcase, and now he's ready to go to court. If those other lawyers only knew Irving the way I know Irving, they wouldn't be afraid of him for a minute. "Pop, you'll see."

"Irving, get off the stage already, go!"

And after Irving leaves I go downstairs. I have to find Fishbein. Fishbein is now our only hope. And where is Fishie? In Schimmel's Cafeteria, where else!

A cop is standing outside the house, so I stay in the hall. Then the cop walks across the street. And for a minute the coast is clear, and I run over to Schimmel's.

SCHIMMEL IS dead now twenty years but his son is Schimmel number two! He looks like Schimmel, he talks like Schimmel, he *is* Schimmel! After Schimmel died, everyone went around with a funeral face. You think we were mourning for Schimmel? No! We were mourning for the Cafeteria! "It's a catastrophe," everybody said, "what will we do without the Cafeteria?" Who could answer such a question? So we waited for Schimmel's to close down. "Yankel," Tillie asked me, "did they take out the fixtures yet?" No. "Did Farbstein buy off the mortgage? Schmulka tells me he wants to tear down the walls and build there a market." But nobody came to tear down the walls. There was a lock on the door but inside everything was the same. And then a week after the funeral, Tillie came over to me and her whole body was shaking. "Yankel," she said, "did you see him?" Who? What? "Come"—and she dragged me over to Schimmel's. The lock was off the door, but everybody was waiting outside. "Yankel," they said, "he came back from the grave." Even Fishbein was afraid. "What's the commotion?" I said, and then I went inside. Schmulka, Schimmel's cashier, was standing behind the counter.

"Schmulka," I said, "who are you working for now?"

"Schimmel," he said.

"Schmulka, you want a shoe in the head?" And he knew I meant business.

"Yankel, wait . . . if Schimmel has a son, then the son is also a *Schimmel,* no?"

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"Don't talk riddles, Schmulka."

"Honest to God, Yankel, I'm working now for Schimmel's son."

"Schimmel had a son?"

"I know, Yankel, it's a mystery. But here he is," and he pointed to the room behind the counter. "And Yankel, he looks more like Schimmel than Schimmel himself." He saw me start to walk behind the counter, and he called me over and whispered in my ear. "Be careful. Every time I see him my stomach starts to jump."

So I walked into the room behind the counter, and there he was, another Schimmel. "My friend," I said to myself, "if you think you're going to frighten me, you're mistaken." I shook his hand and said hello, and then I walked out of the room.

"Yankel," Schmulka said, "you saw him?"

"I saw him."

And then I stood near the door and started to motion with my hands. "Max, Morris, everybody! Come inside. Schimmel's is open again!"

And for months everybody talked only about one thing: Schimmel's son.

"So how could Schimmel have a son? The man wasn't even married!"

"And how do you know he wasn't married?"

"How do I know? I know, that's all!"

So we talked and shouted and argued back and forth, and we came to only one conclusion: we didn't know the first thing about Schimmel or his son. And this was a little hard for us to accept. When he was alive, Schimmel never took a step outside the Cafeteria. If you wanted him in the morning, or in the afternoon, or even in the middle of the night, you always knew where to find him. If he wasn't sleeping on Schmulka's bench, then he was chewing on a stale roll, or playing solitaire in the little room behind the counter. We had Schimmel all mapped out. We knew every one of his moves. If Schimmel touched the wart on his nose or sat in his room and played solitaire, then we knew business was bad. If Schimmel slapped his head and started complaining, then we knew business was good. And if he went around saying, "Oy, I'm going to have to close down the Cafeteria," then we all knew that he was thinking of adding an extra counter or hiring three more helpers. "You can't trust anybody," Schmulka would say, "not Fishbein, not Max, not Yankel, not Morris, but you can always be sure of Schimmel!" And how did it turn out? Schimmel was the biggest mystery on Second Avenue. Who knows how many sons he had!

BUT FOR ME one son is enough. I walk into Schimmel's and there he is. He's sitting on Schmulka's broken-down bench and he's picking little pieces off the crust of a three-day-old onion roll with his black fingers until the onion roll is almost bald already. Sometimes I forget that Schimmel the second is not Schimmel the first, and I ask him questions that only his father could have answered. The trouble is that nobody bothers to make a distinction any more between Schimmel the father and Schimmel the son. Half of my friends have already forgotten that Schimmel the first ever died. People are beginning to take Schimmel for granted. Everybody is sure that when *this* Schimmel goes, another Schimmel will show up. I'm not so sure. With Schimmel around, anything can happen.

"Schimmel," I say, "Fishbein's still here?"

He keeps on picking away at the bald onion roll, and without looking up once, he points to the back of the Cafeteria. Meanwhile Schmulka walks over. He winks to me and starts mimicking Schimmel. "Yankel," he says, "I hear Farbstein is on the warpath again. Can Irving do something or not?" I walk with Schmulka to the back of the Cafeteria. Fishbein is sitting by himself. "Schmulka," I say, "excuse me for a minute. I have to talk to Fishbein."

He winks to me again. "I know, I know. If Irving can't shut up Farbstein, then Fishbein will." And then he walks back to the front of the Cafeteria.

I sit down next to Fishbein. He's drinking tea.

"Fishie," I say, "so how's the leg?"

He dangles his tea bag over the glass.

"The same," he says. Fishbein had a blood clot in his leg the year before last and now he's practically a cripple.

All the tables next to us are empty. That's the way it always is when Fishbein is around. People are still afraid of him. And who can blame them? Thirty years ago Fishbein was the biggest gangster on the whole East Side. He used to terrorize all the local

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businessmen. If you didn't pay him protection, you could forget about your market, or your store, or your stand. Even Schimmel had to pay up. On Second Avenue the name Fishbein was like a curse. His own mother said the Kaddish for him, and considered him as dead. But there were still bigger gangsters than Fishbein. And one day—was it in 1933 or 1934?—the word went around that Lepke or somebody else was out to kill Fishbein. "Good," everybody said, "now the lion himself will know what it means to be eaten alive." But then we began to reconsider: after all, a Jew is still a Jew. So we hid Fishbein for three weeks behind the counter in Schimmel's and we kept him alive on bagels and lox. And then like a miracle Lepke himself was killed and Fishbein came out from behind the counter. And from that day on Fishbein never bothered a soul on Second Avenue. And if some goon from Uptown tried to push around one of the merchants or the tailors, right away Fishbein was called in. "Fishie, they want Boris should pay five dollars a week for protection." And Fishbein would say, "Boys, leave it to me." And the goon would never come around again.

Then, after a few years Fishbein went into retirement. And now he sits in Schimmel's and collects Social Security.

"Fishie," I say, "the situation with Farbstein is not so good. He's getting ready to dispossess the whole house."

Fishbein dangles the tea bag inside the glass. But I know he's listening.

"Fishie, I thought maybe Irving could do something, but it's no use."

I'm waiting for Fishbein to say, "Yankel, you can count on me," but he doesn't say a word. Sure, I know he has problems of his own. It's no joke after having a blood clot in your leg. But I decide to ask him, anyway. "Fishie, maybe you can do something? You know how Farbstein is afraid of you. I don't say you should threaten him or push him around. Who wants violence? Talk to him. That will be enough."

And now he puts down the tea bag. "Yankel, you know yourself that Irving is working for Farbstein."

Should I look angry and deny it? No, not to a friend. "Fishie, I first found out today. "That's why I came to you. Maybe. . . ."

"Yankel, you know if I lean on Farbstein, he'll call for Irving. And who wants to start up with Irving? That's all I need. Irving wants to be Governor. And if he ever catches me in court, he'll crucify me! Yankel, I have to tell you? He's your son!"

"Fishie, who wants to get you in trouble? I'll find a way to settle with Farbstein myself. One thing, Fishie, Irving has ambitions, I know, but he's not a snake. This I can guarantee. Sure, Irving wants to be the Governor, who says no, but not like that! Fishie, believe me, from my Irving you have nothing to worry." This is what I would like to believe, but who knows if it's true?

And now Fishbein picks up the tea bag again, dangles it nervously for a minute, and then drops it inside the glass. "Yankel, I'm sorry, I can't help you . . . but I know somebody who can." He hesitates for a minute and like a fortune-teller he sticks his nose inside the glass. "Pincus."

I stand up and start to walk away from the table. "Fishie, you know already that when people are around me there is one name that is never mentioned. So why are you starting up?"

"Yankel, he's the only one. Nobody else can help you. Not even Irving can put Pincus down. Yankel, he'll be here soon. Should I talk to him?"

AND THEN like magic in comes Pincus through the door. Today is Tuesday, so he's wearing his Tuesday suit. Pincus has seven suits, one for every day of the week. And God forbid, if he should ever wear his Tuesday suit on a Wednesday, or his Wednesday suit on a Friday, I think the world would come to an end. Pincus is not even five feet tall, and he has a hump on his back, and a boil on his nose that's almost as big as a grape. But ugly as he is, people can't stay away from him. He's the main attraction at Schimmel's. As soon as he comes in, everybody congregates around him.

"Yankel," Fishbein says, "should I ask him?"

"Fishie," I say, "you want to stay my friend?"

Pincus walks over to his table. Right away Schimmel brings over a plate of boiled potatoes and a large bowl of borscht. Schimmel reserves a table all day for Pincus. And even if the Cafeteria is packed, no one is

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allowed to sit down at the table. Once I saw a man try to remove a salt shaker from Pincus's table, and Schimmel almost had a fit. And Schimmel the first was worse than Schimmel the second. He worshipped Pincus. He wanted to keep the Cafeteria closed every morning, because Pincus showed up only in the afternoons. "Schimmel," everybody told him, "don't be a dope. Did you ever hear of a cafeteria that was closed in the morning? People will laugh at you. You'll have to close up altogther." But Schimmel wouldn't listen. So me and Tillie and Itzie the shoemaker formed a special committee to keep Schimmel's open in the morning, and we all agreed that I should be the spokesman. "After all," everyone said, "the only way to get to Schimmel is through Pincus, and the only way to get to Pincus is through Yankel!" At that time me and Pincus were just like Mutt and Jeff. What, when Pincus dedicated his first book of poems to "Y.R.," you think the Y.R. was for Yetta Rosenberg the Rumanian actress? That's what Pincus says now, but don't believe it! The Y.R. was for me, *Y*ankel *R*abinowitz. And if anybody wanted a favor from Pincus, first they came to me. I never liked to bother Pincus about unimportant things, but the situation with Schimmel and the Cafeteria was becoming a little dangerous, so I said, "Pincus, have a heart. For you it's no problem. You're a regular gypsy. You stay up all night and sleep in the morning. But how will the rest of us be able to get through the day without a cup of Schimmel's coffee in the morning? Pincus, we'll never survive." So Pincus agreed to show up one or two mornings every other week, and now Schimmel was satisfied.

Pincus sits and eats his potatoes and borscht, and everybody brings over their chair. Soon Pincus will finish eating and then Schimmel will close up the counter for half an hour. And when Schmulka leans over to light up Pincus's cigar, the whole Cafeteria knows it's time to keep quiet. And God forbid if now Wolf the wholesaler should try to tune up his balalaika or maybe whisper to someone, Schmulka will throw him out by his ear, and poor Wolf will be banished from Schimmel's for at least a week. When Pincus speaks, no one is allowed to make a sound.

And now Schimmel is getting ready to close up the counter, and I can see that Fishbein wants to go over to Pincus's table. He keeps playing with the tea bag, but he looks at Pincus all the time.

"Fishie," I say, "you're making me nervous, go over already!"

But Fishbein doesn't want to leave me by myself, so he says, "Yankel, I'll listen from here."

"Am I a baby that you have to sit with me? Go!"

"Yankel," he says, "we'll talk later." Fishbein's left leg is still a little swollen from the blood clot, and he walks with a limp. He takes three steps, then he turns around and says, "Yankel, don't worry. I'll find a way to fix Farbstein." Schmulka is getting ready to light up the cigar, and now Fishbein drags his left leg and hurries over to Pincus's table. Fishbein knows that Schimmel would never dare to throw him out of the Cafeteria, but he still wants to get over to the table on time. Schmulka makes a place for him, and Fishbein sits down. And now I'm the only outcast in the whole Cafeteria. But no one is forcing me to sit in the corner. If I wanted I could go over and sit next to Fishbein, but why should I? Pincus is the man who ruined my career! And for what? Everybody on Second Avenue knows the story. That midget over there fell in love with Shaindele Goldstein—a chorus girl in one of Molly Picon's shows! He used to send her flowers, write poems to her, and chase after her like a dog, but what did she want with a midget like that! I don't want to be a show-off, but why shouldn't I tell the truth? Pincus ran after Shaindele, and Shaindele, she ran after me! But Pincus was my friend, so I tried to avoid her. And every time I had a chance, I would talk to him. "Pincus, a chorus girl? Everybody is laughing at you!" But the minute I said a bad word about her, he would throw me out of his room. And Shaindele, she wouldn't leave me alone! She said she would kill herself unless I went with her to the Catskills for a week. So what could I do? I had to agree. And what was my reward? Pincus found out, and the same day Shaindele and me came back from the Catskills, he caught me in Schimmel's and spit right in my face. And in front of everybody yet! And this was only the beginning. At that time Pincus used to

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write reviews for the Yiddish newspapers and magazines, and all the actors and the producers were afraid of him. A show could never be a success on Second Avenue unless Pincus gave his approval. And now every time I would pick up the paper to read, I would see my name mentioned in one of Pincus's articles or reviews. He called me a fake, a fish-seller, a toad without talent. What, what didn't he call me! The producers didn't dare to put me in a show. They knew that if I were in the show, Pincus would automatically call it a bomb. Nobody, not even the Hebrew Actor's Union, could do something for me. And when Maurice Schwartz told me himself that he couldn't take me to California with the Yiddish Art Theater to do *Yoshe Kalb,* I knew for me it was the end. So you expect me to come out from my corner, heh? Better I'll sit here forever than go over and listen to one of Pincus's stories!

Now EVERYBODY is waiting. Will Pincus talk about the Yiddish Art Theater, or about the life of Sholem Aleichem, or will he talk about Lermontov's duel, or Gogol's trip to Palestine? Only Pincus himself knows! But whatever story he decides to tell —let it be about a peddler in the street— one thing is sure: Pincus will bewitch the whole Cafeteria. And everybody will sit around him like children at a puppet show.

I can hear Pincus from my table. He mentions the name Turgenev. So I know today he will tell the story of Turgenev and the prima donna—who can remember her name? Pincus has told this story maybe a hundred times, but Fishbein, and Schimmel, and Schmulka, and everybody else in the Cafeteria will tuck in their behinds and wait for Pincus to tell it again. If Pincus were a professional storyteller, half the Cafeteria would fall asleep on him and the other half would look at him with empty faces. He would have a special routine, and everybody would get to know all of his little tricks, and in time Pincus himself would become bored by his own stories. And then, God forbid, if Pincus wanted to talk about Turgenev, the whole Cafeteria would rebel. "Oh, no," everybody would say, "not Turgenev again!" And maybe Schimmel would stamp his foot, and Schmulka would chase Pincus out of the Cafeteria. But this is not the case. Pincus is not a professional, he's not a showman, he's a genuine one-hundred-per-cent-storyteller. If Schimmel sits with his eyes ready to pop out, it's not because Pincus moved his fingers and mumbled some fancy mumbo jumbo. Pincus doesn't practice voodoo. And it's not because he has learned the art of telling a story. If that's all it was, believe me, Schimmel would be snoring by now. It's because Pincus himself is always moved by his own stories. If Pincus cries when he tells the story of how Pushkin died, it's not because he is trying to impress the Cafeteria. Schmulka and Fishbein and the others would never stand for crocodile tears. Other storytellers have tried it, and they've been banned from Schimmel's for life. Pincus cries because he loves Pushkin. And he mourns for all the wonderful poems and stories that Pushkin would have written if he had lived at least for another five years. And it's like a disease. Soon the whole Cafeteria will be crying too. "Pushkin is my brother," Schimmel will say, after he dries his face and puts away his handkerchief, "from now on we will leave an empty chair for him in the Cafeteria." Now you know why there are always seven empty chairs in the Cafeteria. The whole world burns candles, but Schimmel leaves empty chairs. One for Pushkin, one for Lermontov, one for Turgenev, one for Lev Tolstoy, one for Gorky, one for Peretz, and one for Jacob Gordin, the Jewish playwright. Pincus's seven favorites.

So you should know, if Pincus is going to talk about Turgenev and the opera singer, he has a good reason for it. Who knows? Maybe he was reading a book by Turgenev last night. Or maybe on the way to the Cafeteria he was thinking about something in his own life, and it reminded him of Turgenev. But whatever the reason, when Pincus tells the story now, you will know more about Turgenev than you could learn from reading a hundred books. And not because Pincus is an encyclopedia. He forgets names and dates, and sometimes from the way he tells the story you will think that Turgenev lived to be two hundred years old. But the important thing is that Pincus will make Turgenev come alive for you, and while Pincus is talking you will think that Turgenev himself is sitting next to you in Schimmel's. Maybe Pincus *is* a sorcerer.

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Sit in Schimmel's and he will conjure up for you Pushkin, Gogol, Hymie the fish peddler, anybody!

I CAN see Schimmel is laughing already under his breath. He would never dare to make a sound. The whole Cafeteria would censor him. Even Fishbein, who never smiles, is smiling. That's the power that Pincus has! And now Pincus talks a little louder. Is he trying to make sure that I can hear him? Pincus never looks at me once, but the whole time I feel that he is talking only to me. Sitting by myself in the corner *I* am his audience, and not the *nudniks* who are bunched around him. Could be I'm an idiot, but that's the way I feel. Pincus is trying to woo me with his voice. And I stay in my corner and pretend that I'm unimpressed. Not a muscle in my face moves. And meanwhile Pincus's face is beginning to light up like a jack-o'-lantern. Last year I caught the flu and I had to stay in bed for a week. And when Tillie came around to give me the news she told me that for the whole week Pincus wasn't Pincus. He faltered when he spoke, and his stories were terrible. And he didn't even show up at Schimmel's for the last three days. The whole Cafeteria was worried. Schimmel was getting diarrhea already. And the same day I came back to the Cafeteria, Pincus came back too. Could be it's a coincidence. Pincus told everybody that his favorite aunt had died. But I know for a fact that he never had a "favorite" aunt. One aunt he has, Tanya the Terrible, and she is ninety-seven years old and a regular witch. She lives in one of Farbstein's houses on East Broadway, and the whole neighborhood is afraid of her. But maybe Pincus did have a legitimate reason for staying away from Schimmel's, and he didn't want to say it? Maybe it had nothing to do with me? Maybe he doesn't even know I'm alive when he's telling one of his stories? It's not important.

"Turgenev," Pincus says, lowering one eyebrow, "what was he? A giant with a big nose! Sometimes on his own estate people would mistake him for a *muzhik*. He looked just like an oaf! Clumsy, and so ugly—it's impossible to describe," and then he rocks his shoulders back and forth, expands his sunken chest, contorts his face, and all of a sudden Pincus is no longer a midget, he's a giant with a fat, sullen face—Turgenev himself! Pincus is my enemy, but I have to admit it: he's a better mimic even than Menashe Skulnik! And now he lets the air out of his chest and it shrinks back to nothing. "And Paulina Vierdot," he says, "she was even uglier than Turgenev! Thin, without a chest, stooped like a monkey, but she had big, black, burning eyes that could eat you up alive." Pincus keeps his sunken chest relaxed but he lets his fingers flutter nimbly, and he contorts his face again, and who knows how he does it, but even from here I can see his tiny, near-sighted eyes begin to swell up and glow feverishly, and it looks like any minute the two sockets that are holding in his eyes will start to sizzle, and his whole face will be scorched. Schimmel sits with his mouth open and both of Schmulka's legs are beginning to shake. And then Pincus drops his hands heavily on his lap, and his eyes lose all of their luster. "Let her be ugly," he says, "but who, who could resist her eyes! Schubert loved her. Liszt loved her. Musset denied it, but he loved her. Berlioz was ready to die for her. Heine and Chopin too. Even her own husband, Louis, loved her! So can you blame Turgenev for following her all over Europe? I'm telling you, the world is ruled by ugly women. Was Queen Victoria a beauty? Or Catherine of Russia? A pretty face can hold you for a minute, and no more."

Soon Pincus will tell how Turgenev and the prima donna met. And first he will mock them and abuse them, and they will both seem comical. Schimmel will have to force himself to keep from chuckling. And then Pincus will slowly warm to them, and he will tell how Turgenev stayed at Louis Vierdot's estate, and how Paulina cared for Pelegeya, Turgenev's illegitimate child. And by now Schimmel will no longer want to chuckle. And then Pincus will tell about the later years of Turgenev's life. And soon Schimmel will get ready to take out his handkerchief. Pincus himself will cry. He will cry for Turgenev, and for Paulina, and maybe also for Pushkin, and Gogol, and Lermontov, and Peretz, and who knows how many more? And after the whole Cafeteria cries, Pincus will give the signal, and Wolf the wholesaler will take out his balalaika and everybody will clap their hands and sing, *"Tum Balalaika,"* or maybe

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"*Tzibeleena.*" And then I know it's time for me to go home.

I LOOK at my watch. It's almost five o'clock. Irving will be waiting for me with his Volkswagen. Pincus is still telling his story, but what can I do? I have to leave. I stand up and walk past Pincus's table. I know Schimmel will banish me for at least a week, and the whole Cafeteria will boycott me, but I should worry! After all, I'm moving out. I walk toward the door. Even Fishbein glares at me. And just before I walk outside, I hear Pincus's voice begin to tremble. Maybe he's just getting ready to clear his throat. Who knows? Who cares?

Irving is late. His Volkswagen is not outside the house. Could be he had a bad day in court. I walk across the street and go up to my room. I take out my tweed suit from the closet and brush it off with a whisk broom. "Irving will like it if I wear a suit. After all, he doesn't want people to say that his own father is a bum." I take down my valise from the closet. It's all moldy already, but I should worry! I search through my underwear and find three pairs of underpants and two undershirts without holes in them. "I will leave the rest for Farbstein. The father of an Assemblyman can't go around with his behind sticking out. It would be a scandal!" Then I put my scrapbook inside the valise, and also my ivory chess set—thirty years ago me and Pincus used to play chess day and night—and a book of Sholem Aleichem's stories. I look around the room. And I don't have to stand in front of the mirror to see the wicked smile on my face. I want to break the lamps, stuff the faucets with toilet paper, mark up the walls, shatter the mirrors. And I'm just about ready to get to work, but then I figure to myself: "Yankel, you will only make trouble for Irving." Don't worry, I will find some other way to take care of Farbstein. I scatter my old underwear all over the room, pick up the valise and leave.

Irving's Volkswagen is waiting outside. Irving himself is leaning against the fender and eating a pastrami sandwich.

He picks up my valise. "Pop, it's light like a feather. Over thirty years you live in one place and that's all you take with you when you move out?"

"Whatever I needed, that's what I took. Irving, promise me that nothing bad will happen to Tillie or the others. Otherwise I'm not taking a step."

"Pop," he says holding up his hand like he's ready to make a Boy Scout pledge, "I promise." He puts the valise inside the Volkswagen. "Wait until you see the place I picked out for you. It's right near the Washington Bridge. And there's a Golden Age Center across the street. Strictly for Jewish people."

"A Golden Age Center?"

"You know. For retired people. Pop, you'll have a regular harem for yourself. The director of the Center tells me there are over a hundred widows. And some of them are still plenty *zavtig.*"

"Irving, please, leave me alone with your widows! What are you now, a matchmaker?"

"All right," he says, and he opens up the door for me. I never saw such a car. It's like sitting on the floor!

We drive past the Cafeteria. Through Schimmel's unwashed window I can see Wolf the wholesaler playing on his balalaika. Schimmel and Schmulka are clapping their hands. Pincus is drinking a glass of tea.

We drive along Second Avenue. I can see old Simon wheeling his pushcart. His back is bent over and he is beginning to limp. What is he selling today? A hot knish or a cold glass of borscht? I want to ask Irving to stop, but he will only say, "That peddler, you'll poison yourself. He hasn't even got a license."

Irving turns the steering wheel and now we are driving toward the West Side. Maybe a change will be good for me, who knows? East Side, West Side, it makes such a difference? Wherever you live, you live! I start humming to myself. "*Shpil balalaika, shpil balalai . . .*" Irving watches a girl with long black hair and a tremendous behind start to cross the street. "Irving, remember, I want Farbstein to stay away from them."

"What? Sure, Pop. Leave it to me."

I lean my head against the back of the seat. "Irving, wake me up when we get near the Washington Bridge. I always like to look at bridges." I close my eyes and right away I see Farbstein's ugly face. The Volkswagen starts to rattle and the face disappears. Now I will try to sleep.

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THOMAS F. CURLEY

CATHOLIC NOVELS & AMERICAN CULTURE

SOME fifteen years ago Harry Sylvester, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* on the problems of the Catholic writer, began with the assertion that there were no living American Catholics who were major writers. At the time the statement needed no proof, it was so obviously true. In the course of his article, Mr. Sylvester enumerated several "problems" peculiar to the Catholic writer, among them the fact that he was committed to more children and fewer wives than the non-Catholic writer, which impinged upon both his practical life and his emotional development. Next there was the problem of freeing himself from the habits of mind developed by an unnecessarily rigid Catholic education. Add to this the very real danger that if he did so free himself, the Catholic powers that be would read his works with a closed mind while presenting to the writer himself a very cold shoulder, and you have a predicament of sufficiently mean proportions to make a lawyer out of Shakespeare. I mention Mr. Sylvester's article because at the time it was written I agreed with it completely and thought it good that what he said had been said publicly instead of in the small groups of young Catholics who were or who intended to be writers, Fifteen years later, the very phrase, "problems of a Catholic writer," seems beside the point. Either these "problems" are not peculiar to Catholics—a plurality of wives (or husbands), for example, can also create practical problems without being any guarantee of emotional growth—or they are not problems at all; that is, they cannot be solved. If one's education has been too rigid, there is nothing for it but to go on from there. In this respect, James Joyce is a good example of what can be done. As to the pressures that may be exerted on one to conform or to "write nice," I know nothing of them personally, but I suppose they will always exist. Censorship may be active and retaliatory or it may be passive and indifferent; there is, however, no way of doing away with it save by making art completely insouciant.

A more important reason for beginning with Mr. Sylvester's essay is that it accepted a view of the Catholic writer that is still common. Stated simply, this view is that former Catholics are not Catholic writers. Eugene O'Neill, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, James T. Farrell, and John O'Hara left the Church; therefore, they are not and cannot be Catholic writers. There is something to be said for such a position: it is clear-cut and commonsensical and avoids a good deal of confusion. The trouble is that it ignores and avoids too much.

It ignores the books the men have written and it avoids any consideration

THOMAS F. CURLEY, a young novelist, made his first appearance in these pages with a story, "A Taste of Sweetness," in August 1959. Mr. Curley's second novel, *Past Eve and Adam's,* was recently published by Atheneum.

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of an American Catholic ethos: does such an ethos exist? and if so, where, how, and for how long? No serious study of Joyce ignores his upbringing and formal education, which was Catholic, even though Joyce throughout his mature years was not. In the same way no serious study of American Catholic literature, as opposed to books by American Catholics, can ignore the work of James T. Farrell. It is clear that if a man's personality and character have been formed in a particular way, he will not change them radically by renouncing that way. Therefore, American Catholicism is relevant to a study of Farrell's novels just as his novels are relevant to a study of American Catholicism.

Let me hasten to make it clear that I am talking not about the Catholic religion as a set of dogmas but about that religion as it has been lived by three or four generations here in the United States; and while I would agree with those who say that American Catholicism is not in the strict sense a culture, I also think that it is a larger, more complex entity than a sect. My primary interest is how the living of this religion affected the imaginations, social attitudes, *and art* of those who grew up as Catholics, whether they later left the Church or not.

From this perspective, I consider James T. Farrell the most representative of the American "Catholic" novelists. Farrell, who was born in 1904, has written of his generation:

> For many of us Americans there is a gap between our past and our present, between our childhood and productive manhood. We are the sons and daughters, the grandsons and grand-daughters of the disinherited of the earth. Our forebears partook little of the great culture of mankind. Their lives and destinies were hard; their contributions to our civilization were made with their backs. We have come from their poverty.

One of the virtues of Farrell's work has been to reveal so clearly the gap of which he speaks. It is a gap that lies not only between poverty and plenty, or between the lower and the middle classes; it is also a gap of piety and, in Farrell's work, of belief itself. Though one finds somewhat similar cleavages in the experience of the other religious and ethnic minorities in America, there were certain special factors in the Catholic situation that need to be taken into account here.

THE FACT that the Church in America was made up almost entirely of immigrants who were poor, seldom educated beyond an elementary level, and often illiterate does not by itself explain how the gap of which Farrell speaks came to develop. After all, a lack of formal education and even illiteracy need not deprive a people of its culture, and many of the Catholic immigrants to America—particularly the Germans and the Italians—had a very strong culture. It may be that if, as at one time seemed possible, the Church in America had developed along national and linguistic lines, it would today be less American and more "cultured." But it was the Irish, not the Germans or the Poles or the Italians, who arrived first in great numbers, and the one problem that they did not have—it was the only one—was the language problem. They spoke English more fluently than Victoria Regina herself (she being German), and it was the predominantly Irish hierarchy that saved the American Church from foreign influences. With the end of unrestricted immigration in 1921, with the growth of elementary parochial schools which, like the public schools, taught only English, and with, later, widespread intermarriage among Catholics of different backgrounds, it became clear that the American Church had grown to maturity in the image of the Irish.

The image of the Irish! Enough, surely, has been said about that, and them. Yet only the other day I read that a recent book by Cecil Woodham-Smith on the great famine in Ireland is considered "controversial" in England. We need only remember here that the great numbers

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of Irish-Catholic immigrants who came to America from 1850 on were, to use a bit of current jargon, culturally deprived to a degree that Jews, Italians, and Germans were not. "America," Simon Dedalus remarks in *Ulysses,* "What is it? The sweepings of every country including our own. Isn't that true?" It is no wonder, then, that when the Catholic University of America opened in 1889, the original faculty of eight had to be recruited from six foreign-born professors and two native American converts. And this at a time when the rector, John Keane, was doing everything possible to counter the charges of "foreignism" made by such groups as the American Protective Association.

It has been said that the Catholic scandal of the 19th century in Europe was the loss to the Church of the working class. In this country the Church was nothing if not working class, and many influential churchmen consciously adopted a policy of making sure that the workers would not be lost here as well. Energy was devoted to the building of schools and to instruction in the elements of the faith. Culture was put between quotation marks and the arts were looked upon as ornaments cultivated by aesthetes and snobs. Such an attitude was by no means restricted to Catholics; many other Americans shared it. But despite widespread anti-intellectualism, there was ferment in American culture in the 19th century: the work of Hegel, of Darwin, of Marx was modifying the older Calvinism. There was nothing intrinsic to American Catholicism to prevent at least a minority of Catholics from taking part in such an experience. And indeed, there was an attempt by some Catholics, toward the end of the 19th century, to do just that—to come to grips, intellectually, with the American experience. The influence of men like Archbishop Ireland and of the converts Orestes Brownson and Isaac Hecker was such that conservative clerics both here and in Europe began to cry out against the heresy of Americanism. Thomas McAvoy, in *The Great Crisis in American Catholic History, 1895–1900,* has treated the controversy thoroughly, and Father Walter Ong has said:

> There was a time at the turn of the century when the Catholic consciousness in America seemed on the point of taking explicit intellectual cognizance of the forward-look habits endemic in the American state of mind. But the circumstances terminating in the letter, *Testem benevolentiae,* of Leo XIII to Cardinal Gibbons, . . . abruptly killed off the dialogue between the Church and America which Hecker, Archbishop Ireland, Orestes Brownson and others had initiated, and dealt a blow to American Catholic self-confidence from which the American Catholic mind has never effectively recovered. Since then, the American Catholic has lived the myth of America, but he has hardly dared to speculate as to its meaning in relation to his faith, or to the spiritual, interior life which the faith demands of him.

Or again, as late as 1941, D. W. Brogan could write, without any fear of being disputed, that in no Western society is "the intellectual prestige of Catholicism lower than in the country where, in such respects as wealth, numbers, and strength of organization, it is so powerful." What should be remarked is that during those very years when American Catholicism was growing in wealth and numbers and strengthening its organization, it was marking time, if not retrogressing, both intellectually and imaginatively.

IN GENERAL, as Hannah Arendt has remarked, the Church, wherever it has remained unchallenged, has stood between the "impact of modernity and the masses of believers"; in America this is what the Church succeeded, at least partly, in doing—although it had neither traditional nor official authority for the attempt. But it was, I believe, precisely this attempt that alienated so many of the young in the first three decades of the 20th century. O'Neill, Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and Farrell, all grew up in that era. Not one of them

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remained in the Church. I cannot agree that they left because they were intelligent enough to recognize that the Church was wrong; they were no more intelligent than Péguy, Claudel, Mauriac, and Maritain. The Church, I take it, cannot be true in France and false in the United States; the Church can, however, seem true and relevant in one place, but seem untrue and irrelevant in another. Which brings us back to the writers themselves, and Farrell first of all, because of the American Catholic novelists only he has really explored the gap I have been describing.

Farrell's faults are well known and have been dutifully noted by a host of condescending critics. What has been ignored, in praising the Studs Lonigan trilogy and lamenting the rest of Farrell's work, is his steady attempt to make art of an experience that is at once common and significant. Farrell's world, his Chicago, is no mere landscape of the mind; that is to say, it never becomes a symbol. It is a place of gasoline stations and trucks; of dark churches where old women pray and are consoled and where young men shift their weight from one foot to the other in boredom; a city of gang fights, of graft, of impotent anger and banal lust; of family loyalty in the midst of poverty; of spring mornings when the young yearn for beauty and, since beauty is difficult, pursue it in libraries where the will flags and the eyes hurt from reading too much. His city does not exist *for* his characters, but over against them.

Nor, similarly, are his characters the creatures of his will. True, it is he who created them, but once born they do not move at his bidding. Farrell has written that he conceived of Studs as "a normal young American of his time and class . . . his dream of himself is a romantic projection of his future, conceived in the *terms and values of his world*" [my italics]. But, Farrell goes on, more and more this dream becomes a nostalgic image turned toward the past. Danny O'Neill is on the periphery in the Lonigan books; we know of him there only that he wanted to be a writer, wanted to "purge himself completely of the world he knew"—that is to say, Lonigan's world. But that is just what Danny O'Neill never does; and it is what Eddie Ryan, the main character in Farrell's most recent novel, *The Silence of History,* never does. In *Young Lonigan* Farrell quotes one of his favorite passages from his close friend John Dewey: "The poignancy of situations which evoke reflection lies in the fact that we do not know the meaning of the tendencies that are pressing for action." One of the motives of art is to discover this meaning. Knowing the "terms" and "values" of that world, and how the terms conflict with the values, Farrell can imagine the tendencies pressing for action: Studs is led to his death. But he cannot do the same for the tendencies in Danny O'Neill or Eddie Ryan.

WHY do the tendencies pressing for action lead to Studs's death? Is it not the Danny O'Neills and the Eddie Ryans, the sensitive ones, who should be led to their deaths? I think not. I think Farrell is right about Studs, and right, up to a point, about Danny O'Neill, for they are both, not so much normal and average, but normal and representative. It may well be that in real life Studs would not have died, but in the Sophoclean sense, he *should* have. In the fate of Studs lies the impoverished world that formed him, doomed to atrophy. Farrell, however, has not succeeded in imagining the destinies of the Danny O'Neills and the Eddie Ryans. Like himself, they are creatures of the gap, powerfully attracted by the myth of opportunity and self-transformation but without the resources to sustain their aspirations. Thus they drift uncertainly and indefinitely. As the late Isaac Rosenfeld remarked of the Danny O'Neill books, Farrell shows what the reality is "against which he plays off the heart's angry knowledge of the better life. But as he envelops it from one point of view after another, from character to char-

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acter and incident to incident, reality envelops him until his anger is gone—and with it goes the knowledge. . . . He would let his anger carry away the burdens of his experience, but it only makes his burdens heavier by calling them back to life. In the end he neither forgets nor hates." This is a brilliant insight into Farrell's method, but Farrell's failure does not lie in his method; it lies in the process by which the "angry knowledge of the heart" is lost, in the limbo between high aspirations and hard facts.

The tendencies pressing for action being obscure to him, Farrell is not the kind of artist who can force his vision on an intractable experience. But it is this very fidelity of Farrell to the experience he has imagined and lived, his tenacious refusal to force or to falsify it, that is his greatest strength and his most valuable legacy to younger Catholic writers.

HOWEVER superior they were to Farrell as literary artists, Hemingway and Fitzgerald have only a peripheral interest for the American Catholic novelist who is trying to cope with his experience as an American and as a Catholic. For if Farrell has never left home, Fitzgerald and Hemingway left early and never went back. Neither of them knew the kind of lower-middle-class, big-city Catholicism that Farrell knew; neither ever felt, I think, outside the great middle class of America the way Farrell did. They may have opted out, but they at least had the option. Farrell might have stepped up and in, but since he was never in, he could not have stepped out.

Hemingway, after *In Our Time,* became intentionally cosmopolitan, a word he no doubt detested but which I think describes his work if it is not used invidiously. Not even Henry James, for all his Europeanism, ignored so completely the texture, the surface, the sentiment of American life as did Hemingway. His Americans are always someplace else; one may say that they think and feel and talk like Americans no matter where they may be, but that, even if it is true, is not my point: they do not confront a native reality, Catholic or otherwise. Hemingway's imagination cuts off the adult from his childhood—that is to say, from his culture. Jake Barnes, Frederick Henry, Robert Jordan, even the Colonel in *Across the River and into the Trees* are all figures stripped of the paraphernalia—emotional, institutional, and occupational—of the time and place of their growing up; they are not cloyed and clogged by the life that formed them. A story like *The Killers,* so American, one might say, could nevertheless have happened in any place where crime is well organized and men are cowed by fear. *Studs Lonigan,* by contrast, could have happened only where it did. Which is to say that Farrell's sense of place is emotional, even visceral, while Hemingway's is acute and narrow; one sees his world through the sights of a rifle.

One could, I suppose, find a certain "Catholicism" in Hemingway's writing. Some years ago in the *New York Times Book Review,* Mr. Burke Wilkinson referred to Hemingway as a Catholic, and to Faulkner as a Protestant, writer. It is true that Jake Barnes prays in church (a prayer that seems to me curiously *toneless*) as does the old man with the fish. One could even detect in Hemingway's style an asceticism, a conscious self-denial that might be described as "Catholic." But this would be pushing rather hard. In any case what is relevant here is not so much Hemingway's religious temperament or the quality of his belief or disbelief, as his relationship to American Catholicism. He is in no way related to the surface aspects of the American Church, and yet it is curious that just as American Catholics adopted a negative stance toward the American experience, Hemingway, in another way, cut himself off, not only from his personal past, but from that of his country as well. All American literature, he said once, is descended from one book, *Huckleberry Finn.* That's nonsense.

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What is not nonsense, what is curiously appropriate, is that Hemingway, in order to develop, felt it necessary to lop off so much of his background. Like Huck, he, too, had to light out for the territory, but his territory was not on the frontier; it was in places and cultures where he could be genuinely alien, alone, and courageous.

FITZGERALD'S case is more complicated. Always something of a snob, Fitzgerald disliked the dreary side of his Irish-Catholic youth and he was dazzled when he made the acquaintance of Father Fay, a converted Episcopalian who, as Fitzgerald was later to write, made of the Catholic Church "a dazzling, golden thing, dispelling its oppressive mugginess and giving the succession of days upon gray days, passing under its plaintive ritual, the romantic glamor of an adolescent dream."

The only Catholicism Fitzgerald recognized imaginatively was European; and even then his attachment was more aesthetic than religious, and it was very far removed indeed from the lower middle classes who crowded the red brick American churches. I am not finding fault with Fitzgerald: a novelist does not choose his subjects; they choose him. Nevertheless, it is significant that Fitzgerald could ignore American Catholicism whereas Farrell could not. I wish to stress *"could."* Catholicism, as a social reality in America, simply did not exist for Fitzgerald in St. Paul, Minnesota, any more than it did for Hemingway in Oak Park, Illinois.

Like other members of their generation of Catholics, Hemingway and Fitzgerald left the Church because the Church in America inhibited their capacity to confront the modern experience. While most of their generation who remained in the Church did nothing but wish that the scientific revolution and the upheavals and disorientations it brought in its wake would prove insubstantial, Hemingway and Fitzgerald (along with writers like Joyce, Yeats, and Eliot) were making the modern experience the center of their work. At the same time, however, having cut themselves off from the life out of which they came, they could find a home only in that large, dim, moribund cathedral sometimes called Western Culture which was mainly celebrating its own demise. The story is well known, so there is no need to rehearse at any length the conviction of decline and exhaustion that possessed (and obsessed) the best minds of that generation, some of whom transferred their faith to the socialism being built in the Soviet Union, only then to emerge twice disaffected.

Meanwhile, in the slums of Boston, New York, and Chicago, the immigrant Church was becoming naturalized. A rather complex process was under way. The Protestant culture that had unified the nation prior to World War I was breaking up; at the same time, the Catholic Church was becoming, not more Catholic, but more American. Catholic high schools and colleges were built, and those already in existence were improved. This has been a continuous process. (I am not yet forty, and I can see with my own eyes how much better Catholic higher education is now than it was twenty years ago.) But the process has also had the effect of creating a stronger centripetal force upon the thought and sensibility of the young. When Hemingway and Fitzgerald were growing up, Catholicism was only a religion; when the present generation of Catholic writers was young, the Church had become stronger, less defensive; it was more a cultural force in the lives of the young. There is such a thing, then, as an American Catholic *experience,* an experience that is more than personal and less than national. Given this experience, the novelist has no alternative to dealing with it imaginatively. And in this, I believe that Farrell, for all his flaws, has shown the way.

It has been a long while now since the novel was merely news. The great novels never were. But the creation of

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characters in time and place, some time and some place, still has to be achieved, for the novel, I think, can never be primarily concerned with ideas and problems; it must focus on things and persons, and to do this a visceral sense of place, an intuition of the way people and places grow and intertwine is, if not a necessity, then a great boon. Whether or not the contemporary American Catholic writers whom I consider most representative—Edwin O'Connor, J. F. Powers, and Flannery O'Connor—have been directly and consciously influenced by Farrell, they have all moved in the direction which he was the first to take.

Edwin O'Connor's first big success convinced many critics that he need not be taken seriously, because despite the fact that *The Last Hurrah* was funny (as funny at times as anything Peter Finley Dunne ever wrote), the disparity between the passages, always in dialogue, featuring Skeffington or another politician, and the rest of the book, the part written "straight," was so great that one could not but wonder what O'Connor would do without Skeffington. The answer, as somebody said, was to resurrect him in the person of Charlie Carmody of *The Edge of Sadness*. But this is a witticism that ignores two significant advances from *The Last Hurrah*. The first is in improvement of narrative technique; the second is the creation of a more specific and solid world than that of *The Last Hurrah,* dominated as it was by the hilarities and hypocrisies of a political campaign.

The world he created in *The Edge of Sadness* is the home field, as it were, of the Catholic ethos in America—that world within a world that exists in every big Northeastern city: the world of politics, usually local; of small business; of parish gossip; of wakes and weddings. This world has neither the amplitude nor the diversity of Balzac's Paris or James's London, and of course it is parochial; but not so parochial, let us say, as Greenwich Village or Palm Springs. O'Connor makes it an imaginatively valid world and his characters act meaningfully within it. What he does not do (and here, I think, is the clue to his unpopularity with the serious critics) is challenge its validity. There is pain and sadness aplenty but the characters never reach the extremity of a fundamental alienation. Many critics seem to think that the unalienated man is unworthy of their interest. But it is worth remembering that the alienated man is unworldly, and unless the writer can create *both* an alienated man and an imaginatively valid world, he had perhaps better settle for the world.

O'Connor's world is rather more comfortable than Farrell's—a softer world, but one more amenable to fiction. The Church is socially strong and respectable; religion continues to act as a stabilizer, almost as an inhibitor of change; and the priestly problems are the old problems of sloth and alcoholism in their parishioners and in themselves. This is an arena intellectuals ought to be better acquainted with, for if it is true, and it is, that whole segments of our culture are without any conscious involvement in the modern world, it is also true that intellectuals have no sympathy at all with the people who pray and fear and hope in the old way. Lower-middle-class Catholics are not the only people in America who never heard of the Enlightenment; the people who crowd into store-front churches never heard of it either—and don't want to.

Like Edwin O'Connor, J. F. Powers has restricted himself to Catholic subjects. He has written so many stories about priests that there is an impression abroad that he himself once studied for the priesthood. From the beginning, however, it was the quality of his prose and the careful, craftsmanlike way he built his stories that earned him praise. His output has not been great: two books of short stories and one novel, *Morte D'Urban,* winner of the 1962 National Book Award.

On one level, *Morte D'Urban* is *Babbitt*

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in a Roman collar; but so thoroughly does Powers imagine Father Urban Roche that he finally transcends the satire and becomes a full-fledged character: in this respect he is comparable to Leopold Bloom. Just as Bloom is the modern Ulysses, Father Urban is the modern American King Arthur, with a touch of Launcelot, who instead of receiving his head wound from the sword of Modred at Lands End, is struck on the head by a golf ball from the bishop's club. The novel not only adroitly parodies Arthurian patterns; at the same time, it explores certain relationships, not all of them healthy, between the clergy and laity. Powers, in short, has used the clerical establishment as a point of departure into the broader, lay world of contemporary Midwestern Catholicism.

FLANNERY O'Connor, like Powers, and unlike Edwin O'Connor, has received more critical than popular acclaim. But unlike both Powers and Edwin O'Connor, her subjects are Southern, rural or small-town, and Protestant rather than Northern, big-city, and Catholic.

That Miss O'Connor's sensibility is intensely religious there can be no doubt, and yet, as Robert Fitzgerald has remarked, in most of her stories "we are aware of the Roman or universal Church mainly by its absence." She herself is quoted by John Hawkes as follows:

> I don't think you should write something as long as a novel around anything that is not of the gravest concern to you and everybody else and for me this is always the conflict between an attraction for the Holy and the disbelief in it that we breathe in with the air of the times.

For more than ten years now, in her novels *Wise Blood* and *The Violent Bear It Away,* and her short stories, Miss O'Connor has been exploring this conflict. Her most recent work that I know of, a novella entitled *The Lame Shall Enter First,* presents the conflict more starkly, I think, than ever before. The central character, a widower and a father (not accidentally his name is Sheppard) ignores his own child in order to "save" an older boy named Johnson who is lame and very bright, an orphan turned delinquent. Sheppard means to make him a "good" man by delivering him from a life of petty crime as well as from the conviction that the Bible is literally true. As a result, he fails to save Johnson and he loses his own son. Toward the end this modern shepherd of souls (he is, characteristically, the city educational director) reflects: "He had stuffed his own emptiness with good works like a glutton. He had ignored his own child to feed his vision of himself. He saw the clear-eyed Devil, the sounder of hearts, leering at him from the eyes of Johnson."

Miss O'Connor has said of her characters: "My people could come from anywhere, but naturally since I know the South they speak with a Southern accent." Well, nobody can come from anywhere, and Miss O'Connor's characters could come from no place but the American South. Evident, I think, in Miss O'Connor's work, as opposed to her statements about it, is the belief that the where and the how and the when of one's upbringing are essential and inseparable parts of one's humanity. It is true that, by abstraction, we can arrive at a universal man by divesting an individual of his color, his heredity, his nationality—all those so-called accidental qualities. But that is not the universality the novelist aims at. And it is not the universality Miss O'Connor achieves, for example, in *The Violent Bear It Away.*

Birth, birthplace, upbringing. Origins and destinies. Things and persons. One of the chief virtues of Miss O'Connor's work is that she has imagined and shaped, in what she likes to call her "one cylinder prose," the human countenance of the holy and has given "the air of the times" a local habitation and a name.

A writer can, I suppose, cut himself off from his past and, free of fetters, enter into strange new worlds. This is the

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way of deprivation, and it may (I doubt it) be valid. But there is another way, the way of assimilation—and that means bringing all of one's heritage with one when one moves. I recall a scene from Brian Moore's last book. The old woman arrives in New York and is taken to her son's and his wife's apartment. She remarks to herself that they have nothing there that belonged to any of their forebears, nothing around them to link them to the past. It is this neurotic, willful poverty that makes profundity in art impossible, for, psychologically, are not memory and profundity the same?

It is also well to remember that the novel is the most bourgeois of forms; it must deal with the commonplace (the exotic, whether it be Siam or the world of drugs, is always a trap); and if it manages to enter the realm of high culture so dear to various elites, it must enter with muddy shoes and a wilted collar. Some years ago Clement Greenberg, in his famous article "Avant Garde and Kitsch," convinced me (not that he intended to) that avant-garde culture is the imitation of imitating. Experience is reduced to expression for the sake of expression. And Greenberg quoted from Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium":

Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence.

In the English novel the great examples of such an art are *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. I admire Joyce almost to idolatry, but it is difficult to see where one can go from him. He uses myth to awake from history, to freeze time not into a moment, but into an eternity, an aesthetic eternity, of truth. If this is the course the novel must take, then it certainly is dead, and we might as well all go to the movies and surrender ourselves to scatolatry. But is this the only course for the novel to take?

The Yeats of "Sailing to Byzantium" suggests that it is, but there is a late poem of Yeats's, later than "Sailing to Byzantium." It is called "The Circus Animals' Desertion," and the last several lines suggest another way:

and yet when all is said
It was the dream itself enchanted me:
Character isolated by a deed
To engross the present and dominate memory.
Players and painted stage took all my love
And not those things that they were emblems of.
Those masterful images because complete
Grew in pure mind, but out of what began?
A mound of refuse or the sweeping of a street,
Old kettles, old bottles, and a broken can,
Old iron, old bones, old rags, that raving slut
Who keeps the till. Now that my ladder's gone,
I must lie down where all the ladders start,
In the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart.

Old kettles, old bottles, the raving slut who keeps the till—these are the poetic equivalents of what I have called the ethos of society with which the novelist must be as much concerned as with the pathos of character, for the two intertwine, interact, nourish, and injure each other. It is within this area that I think Farrell's example is so useful; ever since the Lonigan books, he has been trying to create characters who act, as well as suffer, in, with, and against the ethos of which they are a part. As for the Catholic novelist in particular, his task is not fundamentally different from that of any other novelist. It may be, however, that by entering *imaginatively* into the parochial American experience he can provide the Catholic community as a whole with that bridge between living as Americans and thinking as Americans which they have for so long been afraid to build. As Wallace Stevens wrote:

Nota: his soil is man's intelligence
That's better. That's worth crossing seas to find.

Catholics crossed the seas years ago; it's about time we started tilling the soil.

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PAUL KECSKEMETI

NUCLEAR ABOLITIONISM

By now all discussion about the problem of how to avert a nuclear catastrophe has been pretty clearly polarized into two opposite positions—usually known as deterrence and disarmament, but more fairly and accurately characterized, I think, by the terms "stabilization" and "abolition." Those whom I call "stabilizers" stress the positive role that the nuclear armaments themselves have played in preserving peace in spite of the prevailing high political tension: which is to say, governments refrain from going to war because the destructiveness of weapons renders the image of war too abhorrent. The "abolitionists," however, see no adequate assurance of continued peace in all this. Nuclear armaments, according to them, are a threat to peace. They can trigger war in various ways—through accident, through the spread of nuclear weapons among the reckless and the irresponsible, or through some technological advance enabling a power to strike without having to fear retaliation. As long as the weapons exist, nuclear war becomes more likely every day, and such a war must clearly result in the destruction of civilization. The danger can be averted only by the total abolition of nuclear weapons.

Each side in this debate claims for its position the greater degree of "realism." For the stabilizers, being realistic means, among other things, recognizing the grave danger involved in complete disarmament, even assuming—as experience gives us no warrant whatever for doing—that a disarmament agreement could be reached. The elimination of nuclear weapons, they argue, could not also eradicate nuclear know-how. On the contrary, a nuclear vacuum would be likely to tempt one power or another to create a new nuclear monopoly. The abolitionists, however, maintain that this risk can be obviated if the nations of the world give up their attachment to an outmoded national sovereignty and turn over their power to a world authority. Thus, for the abolitionists the idea of world government is no longer a woolly-minded dream; nuclear weapons have made of it the agency of purest national self-interest.

The most recent statements of the case for complete disarmament under a supranational authority have been made in two very dissimilar books—one by an American, Max Lerner's *The Age of Overkill,** and the other by an Englishman, John Strachey's *On The Prevention of War.*† Mr. Lerner, content to take the stock arguments of abolitionism at their face value without critical examination, deals in large abstractions. He is mainly concerned with showing how the interplay of metaphysical forces like Power, Empire,

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* Simon & Schuster, 308 pp., $5.95.
† St. Martin's Press, 334 pp., $5.95.

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and Order determines the historical process and leads it to a necessary culmination in the establishment of a peaceful universal authority. And in view of his sense of grand historical sweep, the immediate issue of nuclear war receives summary treatment. Mr. Lerner dismisses the whole policy of deterrence—to which he denies any credit for the stability of the past seventeen years—as being a sheer absurdity, based on "non-rational fears" and at the same time only workable if everybody acts with "flawless rationality." In his opinion, it can finally produce nothing more than a "deadly spiral."

Mr. Strachey, on the other hand, neither sees nor treats the problem so simply. In masterly fashion he sets forth both the conditions under which deterrence can and does contribute to keeping political tension under control, and those under which it might cease to do so. His whole analysis constitutes an implicit rejection of the idea that we can immediately bring about total disarmament. In fact, for the short run, Mr. Strachey endorses what I have called the "stabilizing" solution: that we must today operate within the margin of safety afforded us by the nuclear balance together with all the other existing (political) forces that contribute to stability. This margin may be a slim one, but it provides some degree of safety nonetheless. Strachey would agree with Lerner about the irrational aspects of a strategy of deterrence. But—and it is just this kind of sober flexibility that makes him so much more convincing than Lerner—he understands that deterrence can still work at a level considerably below that of "flawless rationality."

BUT APART from their respective assessments of the role played by deterrence in preventing nuclear war, both writers, by insisting on the significance of political factors outside of nuclear force, have provided a useful corrective to the thinking of many "stabilizers." It has lately become something of an intellectual fashion to treat the problem of war and peace as if it were primarily one of arithmetic, soluble in terms of such things as the numerical relationship between "first-strike" and "second-strike" forces. Yet the problem of avoiding nuclear war is far from exhausted by considerations of how best to "deter" an unprovoked "first strike." The immediate challenges facing the major powers in our time—as Lerner and Strachey quite properly emphasize—come from elsewhere and must be met otherwise, even if we also have to continue to maintain a posture of deterrence.

Ultimately, of course, the arguments of both Lerner and Strachey—regardless of any differences of tone and outlook—lead to disarmament: they share the belief that nothing but the total elimination of nuclear weapons can give us true security from nuclear war. Characteristically, it is Mr. Strachey who pays respect to the difficulties of the position, and presents an altogether fair and lucid discussion of the disarmament conferences of 1954–1955—summing up with the wry observation that "one infallible way of breaking up a general disarmament conference is to accept the other man's proposals."

Mr. Strachey rests his case for the feasibility of disarmament mainly on the notion that it would serve the respective national interests of the two "superpowers." It is a notion that has been expressed before and that, even in Mr. Strachey's kind of careful analysis, seems far from persuasive. In talking about a test-ban treaty, for instance, Mr. Strachey looks forward to a tranquil world under a dual American-Soviet "world nuclear hegemony"; and yet elsewhere he describes Soviet and American self-interest as a force for an international order in which all sovereign power would be submerged—without seeming to realize that these two views are quite incompatible.

It is, after all, possible for two powers to recognize the profit to themselves in mutual disarmament and at the same

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time to see, or suspect each other of seeing, an even greater profit in cheating. Surely this is the main obstacle to disarmament. The real question here is how far the idea of self-interest as the unwitting instrument of an altruistic moral order—the idea central to the tradition of British liberalism and utilitarianism—can take us. Certainly no one would disagree that any enlightened self-interest points toward peace and compromise rather than intransigence and conflict. But from there to something as grand as Mr. Strachey's new "world loyalty" is a long, and unprecedented, step. All past history, at any rate, teaches us that new loyalities grow precisely out of conflict and self-sacrifice and not out of compromise and self-interest.

The concept of a new loyalty to a world authority, for the sake of which old national loyalties are to be discarded, is—like the entire abolitionist system—buttressed by a "realistic" assumption. This assumption, put simply, is that the sovereign nation-state is obsolete; the contemporary world no longer provides any room for national sovereignty as it has traditionally been known. Mr. Lerner's book is essentially a large elaboration on just this theme.

The disappearance of sovereignty is a currently popular idea among a good many liberals, for whom "sovereignty" implies a self-sufficient plenitude of power, limited neither by legal restraints nor by the interests and countervailing power of others. Now, it is entirely true to say that there can be no such sovereignty in the world today—but then there never has been. The term "sovereignty" has in the past been used in many different senses, including some fairly extravagant ones; reality, however, always fell short of the claims, particularly the most extreme. Indeed, as a working legal concept, "sovereignty" usually implied the very opposite of the present liberal image—namely, a substantial limitation on freedom of action.

The modern concept of national sovereignty presupposes an international system containing many "sovereign" members having the same status while differing as to their strength and influence. In such a system arbitrary freedom of action is doubly limited: first, in that all members have a mutual obligation to respect one another's sovereign rights; and second, in that all are constantly forced to deal with one another's potential power. National sovereignty has come to consist above all in the generally recognized claim of individual governments to have inclusive over-all legislative, executive, and administrative control within a circumscribed territory. In this sense sovereignty, far from becoming outmoded, is being extended to more and more formerly nonsovereign territorial and ethnic units. Moreover, certain of the prerogatives of sovereignty have come to be interpreted and exercised far more stringently than ever before. Consider, for instance, the degree of control in the hands of the national state over such things as the movement of private individuals across state boundaries, foreign and domestic property, or currency exchange rates—a degree of control, of "sovereignty," that would indeed have seemed shocking in, say, the era before World War I. National sovereignty is very much with us. Even the U.N., as a new supranational agency, does not infringe upon the sovereignty of its member states.

It is thus rather difficult to imagine what Mr. Lerner can possibly have in mind when he says: "The national state no longer exists in any sovereign sense except in its diplomatic abracadabra and its formal voting in the U.N. and other international bodies." This statement means on the face of it that national governments can no longer do anything more on their own authority than write diplomatic notes and vote in the U.N. Surely even a man of Mr. Lerner's internationalizing zeal cannot believe that.

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But of course Mr. Lerner does not intend his assertion to be taken literally; as the context indicates, what he really wants to say is that with the advent of nuclear weapons the sovereign right to wage war has lost all meaning. And here he is at least partly right; though curiously, even this idea depends on the view—rejected by Mr. Lerner—that the risks of nuclear warfare have tended to deter or restrain warlike behavior.

The truth is that nuclear-weapons technology has made inroads of a different nature upon national sovereignty. It has led to the formation of political-military blocs in which the sovereignty of the members as war-making powers is more or less submerged. This is in fact what Mr. Lerner points to in his concept of "empire," by which he refers to a superpower surrounded by a coalition of dependent partners or satellites. But "empires" of this kind do not mark the attrition of national sovereign power, even with respect to making war: an "empire" is merely the pooling of such power, not its nullification.

With the "realistic" grounding for the case not so safe or certain as it might at first have appeared, we are back once more with our "idealistic" hopes. The world, according to Mr. Lerner, can and will move away from the "power principle" embodied both in nation-states and in "empires"; and beyond this "power principle" there looms a new universal "order." The principle of order, of course, will not and cannot dispense altogether with power. Disarmament, Mr. Lerner says, must be followed by the creation of a supranational authority with "teeth." The U.N. in its role as the protector of peace will rely on a volunteer police force having a monopoly of the "more lethal weapons." The police force will, on any decision by a mixed political-judicial tribunal that an act of aggression has taken place, impose its sanctions. Mr. Strachey calls for something similar, endorsing Bertrand Russell's demand for a U.N. world nuclear police force.

Now, even if one accepted such a plan as practical—forgetting that it is based on the unlikely expectation that the great powers will one day give the U.N. power over their life and death—the "idealistic" principle itself here is highly questionable. The abolitionists, who as sincere humanitarians are probably repelled by the execution of individual criminals, are nevertheless in this case implicitly supporting the possible extermination of whole populations in punishment for the sins committed by their governments. Mr. Strachey indicates some moral qualms about this but quickly suppresses them, apparently on the grounds that international "aggression" constitutes such a hideous crime and threatens such enormous public danger, that the world has a moral right and duty to curb it by any means, including extreme terror.

There is a great weakness in this argument. Aggression and the resort to violence can be considered wholly inexcusable only in a wholly just world in which nobody need despair of obtaining redress for grievances. But if the world is not a just place, one must be prepared for a good deal of violence and aggression—and prepared, moreover, to recognize that some of it might be morally excusable if not entirely justified. The mere fact that "aggression has been committed" cannot morally justify extreme repression in these circumstances.

And a world that is less than just—to put it mildly—is the real world in which we live; even the best and most humane national communities do not measure up to this ideal. Nor can a supreme world authority automatically produce a just situation, or even guarantee redress for every wrong. The very meaning of social and political justice is, and will remain, under contention, and there can be no "world loyalty" if there is no consensus at least on basic principles. And yet the supreme authority envisaged by our au-

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thors depends on precisely such a loyalty: and on a denial of the possibility that spontaneous violence might be excusable, that aggression might involve a good deal of moral ambiguity, that rights and wrongs might be parceled out more or less evenly among "aggressors" and "defenders." Admitting these possibilities would in fact be tantamount to rehabilitating war—the one thing that abolitionist doctrine must rigorously and absolutely exclude.

THE EVIL THAT a universal authority promises to banish from the world, then, is in fact not the Bomb but war itself and the national sovereignty which makes war possible. Once placed in the hands of the U.N., the Bomb is no longer a thing to be Banned but becomes nothing less than the instrument of justice. The central doctrine of this system is that no one—on pain of extermination—may take justice into his own hands. The supreme crime is *unauthorized* violence, no matter the provocation or justification; authority will simply crush anyone who, by rebelling, infringes its absolute monopoly of violence.

This is the definition of tyranny. Terroristic threats from authority destroy *all* freedom and *all* moral responsibility. Men like Lerner and Strachey do not see this: they think that threatening "aggressors" with extermination, or even exterminating them in the name of justice, would affect no peaceful and honest man's rights or freedom. But I think this is a fundamental error. No just and peaceful political order can be built upon outlawing offenders. Moreover, one should not think that weapons of mass extermination supposed to serve the cause of justice could only be used against "them," the "bad" people, but never against "us," the "good." One can perhaps understand the moral callousness involved in accepting the idea of mass extermination as a means of protecting peace-loving humanity: callousness of this order is the heritage of 20th-century history and has become endemic among humanitarian progressives. What is incomprehensible, however, is the euphoric assurance with which they contemplate a U.N. nuclear force.

The question of who might be threatened by such a force depends on many things—but first of all, of course, on the political coloration of the ultimate judicial-political authority. The force might be more threatening to the "haves" or to the "have-nots" as the authority should turn out to be more revolutionary or conservative. And if—as seems likely from the record of the U.N.—the authority itself should be divided on this, its striking arm would function erratically or be paralyzed altogether.

Another factor would be the composition of the force. If its members were unable to transcend all natural feelings of solidarity with their respective native groups, they would refuse to carry out nuclear sanctions against their own people. So that if the force were homogeneous in its basic ethnic-political orientation, it would be effective only against the outgroup; if heterogeneous, it would split. In a crisis, its members would fight among themselves, perhaps with the outcome of leading nuclear missions against both sides in a given contention. The result would be a general nuclear conflagration—the very thing from which the U.N. nuclear monopoly is supposed to protect us.

To be sure, the U.N. could establish a policy of recruiting for its police arm only those people who are free of particular national, cultural, and political loyalties and who are dedicated solely to the service of the world authority itself. Such is the solution envisaged by Mr. Lerner and Mr. Strachey. On the face of it, the idea of a new international class whose direct and exclusive allegiance is to world justice is attractive enough. But it would be well to consider first what sort of personalities would be drawn to the job of exterminating international lawbreakers—even if they be kin. It is highly doubtful that

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there would be many gentle humanitarians among them. Alas, the most attractive thing about such an assignment would probably turn out to be the exhilaration of total power, of being able to wreak death and destruction without the slightest risk of retribution—in the name of "higher justice." The same sort of thing, it is true, can be found sometimes in the psychological makeup of soldiers; but there is still a difference between a soldier, who may have been pressed into duty, and a man who volunteers to be a hangman.

WOULD THE world really be safer in the hands of such personalities? An important element in the abolitionists' argument is the proneness of our presently constituted nuclear forces to accident, to excessive zeal and impetuousness on the part of commanders and subalterns, to the grave risks of insubordination. By what magical process would a "neutral" nuclear force under the U.N. become immune to the same dangers? It would, presumably, be largely free from national prejudices and combativeness; but it could nevertheless easily become responsive to other forms of aggressiveness, other destructive impulses. Rootlessness, the absence of traditionally conventional human ties, sympathies and antipathies, could, instead of providing a more perfect neutrality, only shift the bases of prejudice.

All of which is intended not to rule out the abolitionist solution, but rather to suggest that there is a certain smug over-facility in the thinking that has been used to arrive at it. Abolition might, all things considered, still turn out to be our best chance for peaceful survival. In arguing this, however, one must concede that the choice is not between a policy which gives us perfect safety and another which can only lead to ruin. Rational thinking is blocked if the cards are stacked in this way to begin with.

The choices that are open to us unfortunately do not include any feasible ready-made option for perfect safety. We can only choose among imperfect policies, giving our preference to that which holds out the best chance. Now the idea of abolition certainly suggests greater safety than we can have while nuclear weapons remain in existence. Yet, seeking maximum safety in this direction may turn out to be illusory. It is entirely conceivable that the actual policies upon which we must rely to reduce the danger of nuclear war to the attainable minimum will have to be mapped in a nuclear environment. This is a good enough reason for working on peace strategies that do not presuppose the abolition of nuclear armaments. If other alternatives turn out to be practicable, well and good—but it won't do to cut off discussion by stipulating that no solution short of the abolition of nuclear weapons is worth considering.

The moral passion behind such a stipulation is understandable and commendable. But letting this passion guide us can only too easily lead to wishful thinking. Unfortunately, the abolitionist position is often supported with pseudo-arguments disposing of the many practical flaws and difficulties besetting disarmament policies by making facile, arbitrary assumptions about the future course of history. Real problems cannot be solved in this way.

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Future-mindedness

KATHLEEN NOTT

THE English philosopher R. G. Collingwood's autobiographical account of his development provides a convincing demonstration of how good it would be if every professional thinker wrote his intellectual autobiography as a normal part of his life's work: especially if he is English or American. And the stress must be at least as much on "autobiography" as on "intellectual." For Collingwood above all makes one see that the way he came to hold his beliefs, ideas, alignments, and oppositions was an integral part of their structure.

One of the reasons why most English and American academic or professional philosophers ignore or would not take kindly to this proposal may be that they are committed to a kind of assimilation to science, and have, whether wittingly or not, been over-impressed by certain inseparable characteristics of scientific thinking—its objectivity and apparent certainty. Particularly in Anglo-Saxon philosophizing, anything subjective and personal seems to be something to be overcome. It is equated with the "emotive" or with "psychologism," so that as a method, introspection is hardly respectable.

There have, of course, been other attempts beside Collingwood's *An Autobiography;* the Schilpp series, *The Library of Living Philosophers,* each volume devoted to one philosophical *oeuvre,* aims to include an autobiography "when this can be secured." Possibly the addition of this proviso is evidence of the very reluctance I have just spoken about. But in any case, genuine unity between the subjective and the purposive seems hard to achieve. The Cambridge philosopher C. D. Broad, for instance, produced an autobiography for the Schilpp series. This is an account of his opinions, general and more strictly philosophical, *plus* some autobiographical details that are indeed psychologically significant and ruthlessly self-revealing ("In September 1939 . . . my mother, to my unspeakable relief, died"). But nobody could say how, if at all, the philosophical development is connected with the life.

Now Ruth Nanda Anshen has edited a series called "Credo"*—thus far including five important American thinkers—in which she has set out to obtain just such explorations of the connection between the personal and the intellectual. Judging from the word "credo" and from the editor's introduction, Miss Anshen had clearly intended to elicit from her contributors a far more personal and unified account of themselves and their work than she has in most cases actually obtained. She meant for each of them, in her words, to "show the relevance of his work to the feelings and aspirations of the man of flesh and bone"—"to define the new reality in which the estrangement of man and his work, resulting in the self-estrangement in man's existence, is overcome

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* The Credo Series, edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen, published by Simon & Schuster: Moses Hadas, *Old Wine, New Bottles: A Humanist Teacher at Work,* 132 pp., $3.95; René Dubos, *The Torch of Life: Continuity in Living Experience,* 140 pp., $3.95; Erich Fromm, *Beyond the Chains of Illusion: My Encounter with Marx and Freud,* 182 pp., $3.95; F. S. C. Northrop, *Man, Nature and God: A Quest for Life's Meaning,* 262 pp., $4.50; R. M. MacIver, *The Challenge of Passing Years: My Encounter with Time,* 133 pp., $3.95.

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. . . the reconciliation of what a man *knows* with what a man *is*." What she is asking of these men, in other words, is: "What is the meaning and value of existence, in contemporary conditions of work, thought, and relationship, to *you*?"

To be sure, Miss Anshen left the contributors to her series totally free—and was right to do so. None of them is a philosopher in the narrowest sense, and the nature of the studies to which they are bound may have made it in some cases especially difficult to respond. In two of the books, those of Professors Moses Hadas and F. S. C. Northrop, the tone is often, whether intentionally or not, that of the expert advocating his specialty. Professor Hadas specializes in the Greek and Latin classics; while Professor Northrop, although he teaches law and philosophy, is primarily and passionately preoccupied with mathematical physics. It is therefore not unreasonable to see the respective advocacy of these two in the context of the by now tiresome—but unresolved—controversy about the Two Cultures (tiresome, but also perennial, and perhaps tiresome because unresolved).

Professor Hadas does not plead for classical languages as such, but for the classics. Latinity is not the issue for him: he approves of translations, and even draws attention to the entertaining and often illuminating new look which has been given to classical themes in our century, particularly by the French—for example, Giraudoux and Anouilh. He thinks of the classics as perennially warming and at least indirectly nourishing by its influence on world literature, like a kind of Gulf Stream: a natural benevolent phenomenon which is vital to us and will be so in any foreseeable future, however clever we become at thinking up artificial substitutes for our real needs. He makes, in short, a good and honest case to which those not otherwise committed can hardly help responding.

The case is one that holds for a particular interpretation of Humanism—the traditional interpretation, in fact, of the "literary" side of the perennial dispute. The scientific interpretation of Humanism has also been going on for a long time. In the 17th century the dispute between "humanist" and "scientist" often appeared to be primarily epistemological, about the *nature* of knowledge. But behind this, as I shall suggest, there was always a moral dispute—at least implicitly—about the differential *value* of kinds of knowledge. This is still true in our own day, although, because of shifting moral norms, it may be less obvious than before.

Classical education, according to Professor Hadas, has been, and still is, of two kinds, which are represented by two types of character — the "scribal" and the "knightly," the scholar on the one hand, and the man of active life on the other. Professor Hadas admits that there have always been scribes and scholars who have been able to turn Greek and Latin into finally dead languages and by their textual fixation even spread the blight into languages which otherwise might have been left alive. (In this connection he complains of the Teutonization of American studies and scholarly language, and thinks American universities would have done better to stick to their British antecedents: at least the British, he says, do not make a fetish of the Ph.D. degree, "the sign manifest of professionalism." To which someone from Britain is impelled to reply that they *do* make a fetish of "sport"; Americans ought to be reminded that cricket is a respectable game for intellectuals because it is so "aesthetic.")

Professor Hadas's "knightly" classicist, if we are being indulgent, is the all-round Renaissance humanist; or, if we are being slightly cynical, the "gentleman," who sidelong if not incidentally, can still put his classical education to good use and sit, say, on a board, or boards, of directors. For Professor Hadas is at pains to show that in America, not so long ago, university teachers of the classics enjoyed a special prestige, and intellectual men of wealth would choose the profession, as in England they might have chosen a career in church, politics, or army: "As late as 1920, a teacher of Greek in a Brooklyn public high school regularly came to work in a chauffeur-driven Pierce-Arrow car."

Nevertheless, Professor Hadas is not nostalgic for past material glories. His best hope is certainly a moral one—to provide a deep and broad tradition for the Humanities, and this is why he is willing to have the classics

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studied in translation, rather than not studied at all. To an objection made by a purist colleague that Aeschylus ought only to be read in the original, he replied that spreading the benefit by means of translation showed that he (and *his* colleagues) "loved people" better than this eminent fellow classicist.

It is good to be reminded that Humanism and the Humanities are about people. Professor Hadas commits himself to the faith that "education is mankind's most important enterprise." But here, surely, "mankind" means men and women, the present people whose potentialities have to be developed and whose lacks and uncertainties have to be helped.

Now the Two Cultures dispute—the Humanities (preferably literature and poetry) versus Science—reveals itself in our time more clearly than ever before as an educational dispute, in the moral and hence psychological sense. What is the right sort of people and, when we know, how can we encourage their development? Even in the 17th century, when the dispute was mainly about the relative "truthfulness" of science and poetry, there was a strong imputation of superior morality to the truthful scientist (anyway on the part of philosophers and some scientists) and an implication that therefore scientists were the right kind of people. This notion has no less power or sanction today.

But the grounds for supposing that either literary or scientific studies, or, indeed, any branch of knowledge, has any special bearing on the production of the right kind of people—people capable of self-fulfillment—seem to be vague and unanalyzed. Historically the literary classicists have got away with the title of the "Humanities," and this certainly suggests a kind of moral victory: they are the side which loves and thinks about people. But the victory rather reminds one of those student "rags," common anyway in Britain, where the fight is about an effigy or statue—in this case, an abstraction of Man.

It may be that the opposing sides can be significantly characterized as being past-minded or future-minded, both of which characteristics are weaknesses when what they point to is a getting away from psychological actuality. The "future-minded" men represented in this series are, as elsewhere, concerned and even troubled about our duty to posterity and about what "Man" is to become, but they give no evidence of having asked themselves whether the real problem is not one of helping him—by means of a psychologically realistic education—to *become human.*

Alone in the series, Erich Fromm, the psychologist and psychotherapist, finds this question his major concern, and applies himself seriously to what is clearly its major aspect: in the editor's words, "the estrangement of man and his work resulting in the self-estrangement in man's existence." Not insignificantly, I should add, Mr. Fromm is also the only one who has achieved a genuine synthesis of both elements in the "intellectual autobiography."

There is more to be said about Mr. Fromm and his existential approach, his concern with the real human individual's relation to himself and to the real given world; these stand in sharp contrast to the "future-mindedness" of most natural-science humanists. The term "future-mindedness" derives from C. P. Snow's description of scientists both in his Harvard lectures published as *Science and Government* and his *The Two Cultures.* For Snow, this term is regarded as representing the morality (and the moral superiority) of a scientist. His future-mindedness is not only thought to provide him with a moral "credo" but, in Snow's opinion, with a formula for active moral life.

It is the "credo" which concerns me at the moment: and in this series it is strongly represented by Dr. René Dubos. In Dr. Dubos's case we must distinguish this credo from the 19th-century doctrine of inevitable progress, but we cannot always do so as sharply as might have been imagined. The scientific humanist C. H. Waddington, for instance (in *The Humanist Frame* and in *The Ethical Animal*), and the religious humanist Teilhard de Chardin—priest and paleontologist (in *The Phenomenon of Man*) whom Waddington, and also Julian Huxley, greatly admire—operate by something approaching this assumption of inevitability: in Chardin's case, because Christ is conceived as emergent, the end-term of the evolutionary process, and in Wadding-

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ton's, because he deems himself to have shown that human evolution has a built-in ethical mechanism. We transmit, he believes, ethical information from generation to generation. This seems to be based on the reasonable observation that the child has an innate capacity to respond to authority, to "hear and to obey." One would have thought that the ethical signification was in the contents, not the structure, of the commands; and Waddington does himself recognize this problem, but without, so far as I can see, providing a solution.

"Future-mindedness" is in fact a very abstract idea, and one that finally contains no suggestion of its precise moral quality or content. C. P. Snow is prepared to assert that for scientists the content is far more naturally a social one than it is for literary men (of this there seems little hard evidence). In his view scientists not only have the sense of "new knowledge to come," a kind of prophetic instinct in the intellectual field, but they are more committed to trying to solve the problems of hunger and war. Their sense of individual tragedy is no less strong but, by training perhaps more fatalistic, they are better at seeing and doing what *can* be done.

NEVERTHELESS, the idea of future-mindedness contains a strong suggestion of the postponing of moral immediacy, and it also comes encased in a moral tone like that of Reade's *Martyrdom of Man:* there is no limit to our racial duty, the more remote the Other, the higher the altruism. But the future is always being born in every passing moment. Moreover, future-mindedness may be in part a way of avoiding the problems of the self and its personal relations. We don't know for sure that we can't improve them, because at present we hardly begin to try. Mr. Fromm, pointing out the intimate connection between intelligence and character, comments on the vast stupidity of the majority of human beings about their personal relations.

It is quite remarkable how the real moral problem of moral evolution, i.e., *how can men become human,* in its immediate and educational aspects, is ignored by the future-minded (who may however have very high intelligence quotients). It is rather surprising, too, to see how readily this moral lacuna can be filled in, even by the natural scientist or by those whose training has given them a predominating interest in natural science, with some near-mystical abstraction.

Future-mindedness, even too much talking about "Man"—a no doubt necessary linguistic habit, which, however, often involves one in prediction if not in prophecy—is after all merely a form of projecting from our immediate experience of ourselves and others. And a form of getting away from them. Life as we know it is lived by plants, animals, men (and women), and at the human end of the evolutionary scale, individuation becomes much more obvious and important. At the same time, the individual is rooted in the characteristics he has in common with his species; indeed, in his particular variants he always partially affirms what is common, and of course to try to separate him out too sharply can only be artificial. A philosophy of "life" (both as a planetary and as an individual phenomenon) which would express this awareness both of likeness and discrimination is badly needed. Existentialism tries, but it is always falling into some exaggeration either of idealism or materialism, and seems more convincing in its literary or psychological expression than in its strictly philosophical.

We could put it another way: that we need a philosophy of "life" that retains the sense of the unique human individual and at the same time takes account of biological and psychological science without falling into either mystical abstraction or behaviorism. This seems to be very difficult to come by, and we may have to continue to look for it (whether we find it or not) in poetry and imaginative literature.

As a biologist, Dr. Dubos probably comes as near to realizing this desirable balance as we are likely to get. He believes that there is so far no convincing evidence that the synthesis of nucleic acid molecules in the laboratory is going to lead to the creation of life, and also that human life amounts to more than can be found in the genes. He shares Chardin's belief that the human species is unique among species, as well as the belief (which is also Julian Huxley's) that we have moved into the conscious or psychosocial phase of evolution (what Chardin calls the noösphere)—in other words, that mind itself is an emergent evo-

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lutionary phenomenon. Dr. Dubos is unquestionably future-minded, inclined to see in our racial devotion and our willing acceptance of an infinitesimal part in biological continuity man's main moral definition. Personally, I find his version of this majestic theme more imaginative than many other varieties of moral futurism—certainly much more than Snow's, which as a morality is materialistic and perfunctory. Dubos for instance sees human uniqueness in the spontaneity of paleolithic art; he is also able to give a much more vivid and moving account of the "in-built moral mechanism" than Waddington does, by tracing it to forms of cooperation which can be found at very low levels of animal existence.

Moral evolutionists have, I believe, a strong impulse to make a split or an opposition between the past and the future which could be obviated if they were more willing to face the conflicts which are, at the very least, an essential feature of individual development. This split results in a certain psycho-spiritual topography—the past identified with hell, and the future with heaven. Their tone of optimism can often sound like whistling in the dark, and can even be disconcerting because the facts that counter optimism are so fresh and obvious that it seems they are not merely missed but studiously ignored. We have improved, says Dr. Dubos, taking as a sign of this the fact that "slavery is no longer acceptable to the collective conscience of Man." Let us leave aside the Nazis, and the fact that the ultimate logic of many present-day economic and political systems (certainly not rejected out of hand by the "collective conscience" because we include them in our working world) is one that works toward slavery. Surely the wish to enslave has only gone underground; and not very far underground, for in our "democratic" communities, a genuine desire for equality in personal relations, sexual or social, "the love . . . that feeds on freedom" is one of the last things you will find.

In Erich Fromm's book, as might be expected, this theme of human ambivalence is omnipresent. And in this, it seems to me, he has answered the editor's questions more fully and exactly than anyone else. One of his life's intentions has been to try to synthesize Marx and Freud, his two strongest influences. Without levity it can be said that however Freud may appear as a political and social thinker, Marx turns out to be a remarkably good psychologist. Mr. Fromm's leading theme then is naturally alienation—a man's alienation from himself, his communal relations, and the products of his work. On the last, every schoolboy knows that Marx had a great deal to say; but in Mr. Fromm's citations it becomes clear that he was sharply aware of the psycho-pathological mechanism of projection, and saw economic "alienation" of work and goods in this symptomatic form.

Mr. Fromm's account of the social "unconscious" is a fascinating reminder of this Marxian insight. It also reminds us of the sad cycle of human ideas, especially of pioneering ideas about human nature: the way the originator's fresh perceptions get taken over by the Faithful and hardened into a Church and a Theology. Neurosis, individual and social, may well now be seen as an example of the inevitable human trick of hypostatizing generalizations (and turning them into immovable memorials to the truth). But Mr. Fromm is really much more concerned with consciousness than with the unconscious. In its Freudian form, the concept itself can be seen as a product of alienation: the unconscious being the receptacle for the split-off objects of knowledge. For Mr. Fromm, on the other hand, knowledge is essentially a *relation* between a knower and what is known.

In fact, the crucially interesting problem presented by the whole series is an epistemological one: of all the contributors it can be said that their respective attitudes toward their experience, intellectual and otherwise, considerably depend on what they believe to be the relation between universalizing concepts and the Real. Furthermore, I would suggest that this is true of the whole Humanist controversy: it is not, and never has been, just a fight about science versus poetry, or science versus religion, but much more about two opposing forms of human apperception (and indeed about whether they really *are* in opposition). Are we to split the knower from the known? Or to affirm their unity, as Fromm proposes?

Are we, moreover, to think of Man himself as an object to be known and analyzed?

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Or are we rather to think of him as the knower trying to relate what is given to him in experience and knowledge? Do we believe that logic exists always in relation to data, that the actual form of our thinking is always conditioned by the particular field of our purposes and interests? Or, on the contrary, do we believe that human thinking is always a more or less faint approximation to some set of perennially correct answers?

Professor Northrop is in the latter camp with Plato and with the numerical mysticism of Pythagoras. He describes himself as a logical realist. He thinks that mathematical physics and mathematical logic give us a true and correspondent account of the reality outside ourselves which we cannot reach through the "perishing particulars" of mortal experience. But he takes the tolerant anthropological attitude toward the diversity of human cultures; and certainly his descriptions and judgments of human cultural history—as for instance, the application of Sir Henry Maine's formula "from status to contract" as a wide-ranging explanation of human political development—are often illuminating in a structural or philosophical sense. Even so, Northrup's abstract-conceptual bias is visible, and goes much further than the idea made acceptable by anthropologists that the unity of a culture depends on its common concepts. Most of us, for example, who regard the free contractual relation in love and business as the basis of democracy would believe that what historically made this at least possible was our long, slow, and not too successful indoctrination in respect for other persons, an indoctrination vaguely acquired from Christian psychology. To Professor Northrop, this is putting the cart before the horse. He thinks we got it from the Greek mathematical physicists. Mathematical physics, "with its conception of any truly known individual thing as an instance of a formally universal law," is what has made it illogical to identify any individual with his transitory or perishing qualities (like the color of his skin or the shape of his nose). He also gives an odd "proof" that altruism is a necessary or logically essential part of our nature, a proof depending on the high-minded notion that because our *perception* of our own existence and that of others is never totally distinct, we are in some way "one" as a species. The actual observed facts of human behavior here seem to be treated as irrelevant. In general, Professor Northrop makes an unduly sharp distinction between "natural history" and any "science"—between what actually happens and the theoretical account of it. In view of this it is not surprising that Professor Northrop ends with a mystical-intellectual exercise "proving" that God is both Love and Freedom.

His publishers are aware of the poetry-science opposition, and seem to think that Professor Northrop has helped to resolve it. I myself think that on the contrary, his understanding and taste for imaginative literature are assimilated to his taste for abstraction. Mathematical physics and poetry, he explicitly claims, must be brought together. But it appears that mathematical physics is the higher imaginative form and that poetry (which he confuses with starry high-mindedness) will have to take the initial step across the borderline. It appears too that Professor Northrop does not understand poets. The misconceived conceptualism appears again in an odd statement that Keats and other Romantics were escaping from their "Universe." I should have thought that they were escaping from their social and personal relations.

It would not be fair to call Professor Northrop "future-minded," but only because he thinks in terms of eternally present ideas: in terms of cosmic rather than subjective time. On that theme, Professor R. M. MacIver, who has written a modest personal essay on the experience of time, may be allowed the last word: he says that at no period of individual existence "should the claims of the future abrogate the claims of the present." This seems to be an explicit rejection of "future-mindedness" as a moral formula. Instead, Professor MacIver finds both a morality and a therapy in the creative and imaginative work of mankind. This is the way that he has "lived his own time." Certainly his description amounts to an intellectual autobiography. After my complaint that some of the other contributors are perhaps too impersonal, it seems ungrateful to ask whether the experience is transferable. How do you teach people to be imaginative and creative, and to live their time to capacity?

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THE FADING MOVIE STAR

Manny Farber

THE STRANGE evolution of movies in the last ten years—with the remaining studios ever more desperate, ever more coordinated—has brought about the disappearance of something that reviewers and film theorists have never seemed to miss: those tiny, mysterious interactions between the actor and the scene that make up the memorable moments in any good film. These have nothing to do with the plot, "superb performance," or even the character being portrayed. They are moments of peripheral distraction, bemusement, fretfulness, mere flickerings of skeptical interest: Margaret Sheridan's congested whinny as a career woman sparring with Kenneth Tobey (Christian Nyby's *The Thing*); Bogart's prissy sign language to the bespectacled glamor girl through the bookstore window (Howard Hawks's *The Big Sleep*); or Richard Barthelmess's tiredly defiant dissolute slouch when he enters the cabana in *Only Angels Have Wings* (also by Hawks). Such tingling moments liberate the imagination of both actors and audience: they are simply curiosity flexing itself, spoofing, making connections to a new situation.

Even so-called photographed plays—for instance, George Cukor's *Dinner at Eight*—could once be made to produce that endless unreeling of divergence, asides, visual lilts which produce a vitality unique to the movies. With the setting and story of a Waldorf operetta, Cukor was able to get inflections and tones from the departments that professional cinematicians always class as uncinematic: makeup, setting, costumes, voices. Marie Dressler's matronly bulldog face and Lee Tracy's scarecrow, gigolo features and body are almost like separate characters interchangeable with the hotel corridors and bathtubs and gardens of Cukor's ritzy and resilient imagination. Cukor, a lighter, less sentiment-logged Ernst Lubitsch, could convert an obsession or peculiarity like Jean Harlow's nasal sexuality, or Wallace Beery's line-chewing, into a quick and animating caricature—much as Disney used mice and pigs in his 1930's cartoons.

Lately, however, in one inert film after another, by the time the actor moves into position, the screen has been congealed in the manner of a painting by Pollock, every point filled with maximum pungency, leaving no room for a full regalia performance. No matter what the individuality of the actor may be—an apprehensive grandstander (Jeanne Moreau) with two expressions: starved and less starved; an ironing board (Gregory Peck) who becomes effective in scenes that have been grayed, flattened, made listless with some domesticity; a defensively humble actress (Anne Bancroft) who over-values her humanism and eloquence—and no matter how fine the director's instincts may be, the result is invariably almost the same. In a situation where what counts is opulence and prestige—a gross in the millions, winner of the Critics' Award, Best Actor at a film festival—the actor has to be fitted into a production whose elements have all been assembled, controlled, related, like so many notes in a symphony. As a full-blooded, big-wheel performer rolling at top speed, the actor would subvert this beautiful construction, and so the full-blooded, high-wheel performance has become an anachronism.

Item: David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia* is almost a comedy of over-design, misshapen with spectacle-like obtrusions: the camera frozen about ten feet in front of a speeding cyclist, which, though it catches nice immediate details of his face, primarily shows him fronted on screen for minutes as a huge gargoylish figure; the camels, by far the most exciting shapes in the movie, photograph too large in the "cineramic"

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desert views; an actor walking off into fading twilight becomes the small papery figure of an illustrational painting; Jack Hawkins's General Allenby, so overweighted with British army beef, suggests a toy version of a Buckingham palace guard. While the other technicians are walloping away, the actors, stuck like thumbtacks into a map-like event, are allowed—and then only for a fraction of the time—to contribute a declamatory, school-pageant bit of acting.

Item: Another prime example of this sort of thing is Serge Bourguignon's *Sundays and Cybèle,* whose two leading players are made to resemble walking receptacles for the production crew. The story (Patricia Gozzi, a twelve-year-old, goes on little outings to the park with Hardy Kruger, an amnesiac) is made into a rite of style consisting mainly of layer-on-layer compositions in which the actors become reflected, blurred, compartmented, speckled, through some special relation with apparatus, scenery, a horse's body, windshield wipers. Such things as the tilt of a head, or a face reflected in a drinking glass, become so heightened, so stretched, that they appear to go on echoing, as if making their effect inside a vacuum. Yet all this is in the service of the kind of role that consists of little more than being delightful with a sniffle or looking transported while walking through trees carrying a child who is cutely imitating a corpse.

THE NEW ACTOR is, in fact, an estranged figure merely jiggling around inside the role. Sometimes he seems to be standing at the bottom of a dark pit, a shiny spot on his pomaded hair being the chief effect of his acting. Or he may be a literate fellow riffling the clutter on his desk. But in either case, performance is invariably a charade: the actor seldom makes his own sense. He is no longer supposed to act as close to credible as possible; he is a grace note or a trill; he is a dab of two-dimensional form floating on the film surface for photogenic purposes.

Item: Keir Dullea's acting of the psychotic student in Frank Perry's *David and Lisa* is broad, swingy, without a moment that suggests either curiosity or the macabre homeliness, jaggedness, that might be expected in a disturbed kid. The set-piece handling of each scene usually finds Dullea's Frank Merriwellish, chalk-white face in the empty stillness, holding to an emotion for an unconscionable time. His tantrum when a doctor pats him on the back takes so long in evolving that the performance of it (crying, a face rigid with intensity, a stiff-handed wiping at his clothes to get rid of germs) seems to be going backward in slow motion.

The only good acting in recent films has been lavished on the role of the eternal sideliner, as played by John Wayne (the homesteader in John Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*) or by George Hamilton (as the liquescent juvenile in Vincente Minnelli's *Two Weeks in Another Town*). These actors salvage the idea of independent intelligence and character by pitting themselves against the rest of the film. Standing at a tangent to the story and appraising the tide in which their fellow actors are floating or drowning, they serve as stabilizers—and as a critique of the movie. Mickey Rooney's murderously gloomy, suspicious acting in Ralph Nelson's *Requiem for a Heavyweight* is another case of superior sidelining, this time among the lunatic effects of apartment scenes that are pitch black except for a 40-watt bulb, a huge hotel sign blinking on and off, actors photographed as eucalyptus trees being ogled from the ground by tourists.

While today's actor is the only thing in the film that is identifiably real, his responses are exploited in a peculiar way. His gaucheries and half hitches and miscalculations are never allowed their own momentum, but are used self-consciously to make a point—so that they become as inanimate and depressing as the ceaseless inventories in Robbe-Grillet novels. Jean-Paul Belmondo, the cool cat car thief in Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless,* is seen standing before the stills at a theater entrance, doing a smeary Bogart imitation that leans on false innocence instead of developing spontaneously. Monica Vitti, a frightened erotic drifter in Antonioni's *Eclipse,* does a scene hog's cheerful reaction to a dog's trick walk, full of "meaning" that upstages the characterization.

Falling out of the film along with the actor as performer are other related devices that once had their value. Compare, for example, the heavy, weighted masks of

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the actors in *Lawrence* with the caricatured features of William Powell, Cary Grant, or Edgar Kennedy, features that served to offset and counterpoint what might otherwise have been precious, sour, or effete about them. Powell, an artist in dreadful films, would first use his satchel underchin to pull the dialogue into the image, then punctuate with his nose the stops for each chin movement. He and Edgar Kennedy, who operated primarily with the upper torso, were basically conductors, composing the film into linear movement as it went along.

ANOTHER LOSS is the idea of character that is styled and constructed from vocation. In Kurosawa's *Yojimbo* (a bowdlerized version of Dashiell Hammett's *Red Harvest,* with a bossless vagabond who depopulates a town of rival leaders, outlaws, and fake heroes), the whole superstructure of Hammett's feudal small town is dissolved into an inchoate mass of Goya-like extras whose swarmings and mouthings are composed with naïve pictorialism. Swarming, moreover, seems to be the full-time occupation; you never see interiors, work, or any evidence of everyday life. The exposition of character through vocation has completely evaporated and been replaced by a shorthand of the character's daily habit, jotted into a corner of the role by set-designer, costumer, author. Jean Seberg's journalistic career is merely wedged into appropriate notches of *Breathless:* a *Herald Tribune* sweat-shirt, a quick question to a celebrity novelist at the airport. The source of Monica Vitti's well-tended existence in *Eclipse* is snagged in a one-line footnote about her translator's work. The idea of vocations is slipped into the spectator's acceptance without further development.

The idea of movement per se has also lost its attraction to moviemakers. The actor now enters a scene not as a person, but like a Macy's Thanksgiving balloon, a gaudy exhibitionistic fact. Most of those appurtenances that could provide him with some means of animation have been glacéed over. The direct use of his face as an extension of the performance has become a technique for hardening and flattening; and the more elliptical use of his face, for showing intermediate states or refining or attenuating a scene, has vanished, become extinct. In fact, the actor's face has been completely incapacitated; teeth—once taken for granted—or an eyeball, or a hairdo, have all become key operators. They front the screen like balustrades, the now disinherited face behind.

The moving body, too, in its present state of neglect has become a burden—particularly on foreign directors, who seem to realize that their actors might be mistaken for oxen, pillars, or extensions of a chaise longue, and so give each of their films a kind of late, sudden, jolt. Toshiro Mifune suddenly comes alive toward the end of *Yojimbo,* throwing daggers into the floor of his hideout. Before this, he could usually be seen in one of those compositions Kurosawa prizes of three heads sticking out of their respective potato bags watching one another's faces while waiting for the lunch whistle to blow and break up the photography. *Eclipse* has a parody, very exciting, of people using their arms and hands in a stock exchange scene; most of the time these actors working on telephones, sandwiches, penciling, seem to be trying to fling their hands away. The *Lawrence* ensemble travels over literally half a continent with almost no evidence that any legs have been used. No actor is ever trusted with more than a few moves: a thin path having been cleared for him to make his walk down a dune, or to pontificate around porch furniture, he is then choreographed so that each motion, each bit of costume, creaks into place.

Item: The lack of athleticism in *Requiem for a Heavyweight* is, under the circumstances, peculiarly comical. The cast seems made up of huge monolithic characters being held in place, incapable of a natural movement—particularly the over-rated Anthony Quinn. Walking down a lonely street sparring at the sky, or mumbling while he puts on shirt and tie, Quinn plays the role as though the ground were soft tapioca, his body purchased from an Army-Navy store that specializes in odd sizes.

The late work of certain important directors—Cukor's *The Chapman Report,* Huston's films since *The Roots of Heaven,* Truffaut's since *The 400 Blows*—shows a drastic change into the new propulsive style. Every element of the film has been forced into serving a single central preoccupation, whether of character (gelatinous frigidity),

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metaphysic (elephants are the largeness and mystery of life), or situation (the kid as misunderstood delinquent). A key, symbolic feature of the new style is the transformation of dialogue into a thick curtain dropped between the actor and the audience. The words spoken by Alec Guinness in *Lawrence* (prissily elocutionary), by Montgomery Clift in Huston's *Freud* (mashed, faintly quivery), by Laurence Harvey's Washington journalist in John Frankenheimer's *The Manchurian Candidate* (girlish, whispering) sound like valedictory speeches coached by Archibald MacLeish, or the way Indians talk on TV Westerns. The peculiar thing is that each word has been created, worked over by a sound engineer who intercepts the dialogue before it hits the audience. There is no longer the feeling of being in close to the actor.

Joan Crawford—despite the fact that each of her roles was played as if it were that of the same dim-witted file clerk with a bulldozer voice—always seemed hooked up to a self-driving sense of form which supplemented exactly what the movie couldn't give her. The current population of actors must probably be said to have more real skills than Crawford, but they don't come off as authentically. Geraldine Page, for instance, an actress of far greater sensibility and aplomb, must go through an entire glossary of mouth-shifting, sinus-clearing, and eye-blinking to make her character in *Sweet Bird of Youth* identifiable as anything. The difference between Crawford's tart in *Grand Hotel* and Page's obsessed ex-star is as great as that between George Kelly and William Inge. The effect of Miss Page's increased power and leisure, which expects no resistance from the movie, is to eviscerate the entire film. The same is true of Gregory Peck's pious Lincoln impersonation in *To Kill a Mockingbird,* and of Angela Lansbury's helicopter-like performance in *The Manchurian Candidate* in which every sentence begins and ends with a vertical drop.

THE FIRST SIGN of the actor's displacement could be seen in a 1952 Japanese film whose implications were not made clear until the New Wave, Antonioni, and others incorporated them into that special blend of modern-art cliché and Madison Avenue chic that now makes such good business. Just about every film aimed at American art theaters has come to be a pretentious, misshapen memory of *Ikiru* that plays on the double effect of the image in which there is simultaneously a powerful infatuation with style and with its opposite—vivid, unstoppable actuality. The fantastic clutter and depression of a petty government office; mouthed-in tepid talk that dribbles endlessly (as in John O'Hara's fiction, where dialogue now devours structure, motive, people, explanation, everything); the poor ghosts who crawl in trying to push a request for a playground in their spot of a slum—each of these items in *Ikiru* seems overrun by a virus of creativity without concern for its direction, everything steaming together into an indictment of drudgery that finally muffles the actors.

The same fungus-like creativity and narcissistic style appear in an almost dead-handed way in *Freud, Lawrence of Arabia,* and *Eclipse.* Here the actors show up as rugs, or an entire battle scene is converted by artful lighting into an elongated shadowy smear. Just as *Ikiru* moves from a white emptied abstract death ceremony to a jammed city scene, *Lawrence* employs the split between desert and crowded Cairo to accent the peculiar density of each, and Antonioni juxtaposes the frenzied stock exchange with inarticulate lovers in emptied streets. Even in the crudely constructed *Divorce, Italian Style,* a din of diverse technical energy moves over streets, trains, the very bodies of the acting team. Mastroianni's face, sleep-drenched and melancholic, stares out of a dining car at the flat, parched Sicilian fields; and few actors have looked so contaminated by sleaziness, a draggy kind of living: it is the whole movie that is sitting on him. *Divorce, Italian Style* is like a parody of the realism in *Ikiru;* there is nothing to touch this unfunny farce for the sheer jarring effect of eager-beaver technicians charging into one another, trying to put in *more*—more funny stuff, more realistic stuff, more any kind of stuff.

Most directors have been pushing Kurosawa's invention to the extreme of treating actors with everything from the fancy tinker-toy construction of *Lawrence of Arabia* to the pure sadism of *The Manchurian Candidate.* One of the wildest films in its treat-

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ment of actors, *The Manchurian Candidate* is straight jazz all the way through—from the men who are supposed to be brainwashed to the normal ones in army intelligence. When Sinatra, for instance, moves in a fight, his body starts from concrete encasement, and his face looks as though it were being slowly thrown at his Korean houseboy opponent, another freak whose metallic skin and kewpie-doll eyes were borrowed from a Max Factor cosmetic kit. Janet Leigh seems first to have been skinned and stretched on a steel armature, and then compelled to do over and over again with hands and voice things supposed to be exquisitely sexual. The audience is made to feel unclean, like a Peeping Tom, at this queer directional gamboling over bodies. And Sinatra's romantic scenes with Miss Leigh are a Chinese torture: he, pinned against the Pullman door as though having been buried standing up, and she, nothing moving on her body, drilling holes with her eyes into his screw-on head.

In one advanced film after another we find an actor being used for various purposes external to him—as a mistake, a pitiful object, a circus sight. The most troublesome aspect of Peter O'Toole's Lawrence is that the story moves faster and further than the actor, who is not unlike the Tin Woodman of Oz (O'Toole starts with a springing outward movement, to walk over the world, and then turns into a pair of stilts walking in quick short strides). Consider also the squashy ineffectual performance by Peter Ustinov in *Billy Budd* (which he himself directed) or the pitiful ones by Jeanne Moreau in Orson Welles's *The Trial* and Truffaut's *Jules and Jim*. A frightened actress, Miss Moreau is never there with enough speed, sureness, or grace, but her directors realize that her inadequacies can be exploited photogenically. Watching her stretch out in a sexy bed pose, or teeter on a diving board, or climb up a bridge abutment, stand poised and then leap off, you get the feeling that her feeble creaking is intentionally being underlined as something to sorrow over.

WHAT WE have, then, is a schizoid situation that can destroy the best actor: he must stay alive as a character while preserving the film's contrived style. Thanks to this bind, there are roughly only two kinds of acting today. With the first, and the least interesting type, the actor is hardly more than a spot: as in Antonioni's films, where he becomes only a slight bulge in the glossy photography; or as in the endless gray stretches of Truffaut's, where his face becomes a mask painted over with sexual fatigue, inert agony, erosion, while his body skitters around weightlessly like a paper doll. Huston's work, too, has moved in a progression from the great acting of, say, Bogart and Mary Astor in *Across the Pacific* to no acting at all: in *Freud* the actors do not escape for one moment from the spaces Huston has hacked out of the screen for them in order to make an elegant composition.

The second style of acting turns up in fairly interesting films. Here the actor does a movie-ful of intricate acting by turning his back to the camera. He piles a ferocious energy and style into sorrowful characters who have lived through dismal orphanages, or alcoholism, or life membership in Alcatraz —precisely the characters who should have nothing in common with his kind of joy in performing, happy animal spirit, all-out vigor. The result is that there is no communication at all between the setting—which is flat and impressively accurate—and the actor, who splatters every second with a mixture of style and improvisation. Blake Edwards's *Days of Wine and Roses* drags unbelievably while Jack Lemmon kicks in a liquor store door or stares drunkenly at the dirty sea water. Lemmon in this movie is a blur of pantomimic skill, though with enough cynicism in his performance to cut the mechanical writing of the role. However, inside all the style, the actor seems to be static, waiting around sourly while the outer masquerade drags on.

There has, finally, never been worse acting, nor more mistakes made by actors being given impossible things to do. A fan's memory gets clouded by these weird performances: a jilted intellectual (Francisco Rabal in *Eclipse*) who goes through an entrance gate as though he had learned to walk by studying an airplane taking off; a U. S. Senator imitating Lincoln at a costume ball (James Gregory in *The Manchurian Candidate*), picking up his didactic acting from several garbage heaps left over from the

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worst propaganda films of World War II. The poor actor today stands freezing, undone, a slab of beef exposed to public glare as never before. Clift's Freud may be hidden behind a beard, buried in a tomb (his walk to the cemetery must be pulled by earth movers), but he is still unmercifully revealed as an unused performer. Some actors, like Jackie Gleason in *Requiem for a Heavyweight,* haven't yet moved into their act. And Kirk Douglas, as a gesticulating angry ex-actor in *Two Weeks in Another Town,* is a body on display, one now shrinking in middle age while the mind of his employer is fixed on other things. Criticism of acting has always been quick to cover a performance with a blanket word, but trying to consider today's actors as auxiliaries of the story in the pre-1950's sense is like analyzing post-Jackson Pollock painting with an aesthetic yardstick that esteems modeling.

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* * *

ONE THOUSAND PAGES OF RESEARCH

Anzia Yezierska

EVERY TIME I walked along Upper Broadway, I saw them. Old men and old women, in their seventies, like me, seated side by side on the park benches set up by a benevolent city on the traffic islands dissecting the main roadway. Every time I passed those benches, stationary amidst the moving cars, I thought about how many more old people there must be all over the city, killing time, waiting for death.

Then one day it came to me. Right here in New York handicapped veterans were being trained for a new life; the blind were being taught skills; why couldn't the old be rehabilitated? After all, we still had much to give. We all had experience and many of us had professional training. Why was all this going to waste?

The idea took hold of me, and I decided to do something about it. I went to the university nearby. I talked. They listened—patiently, but helplessly. I was passed from one department to another. The Rehabilitation Department was only for young veterans. The Adult Education Department was mildly interested, but saw no way of adopting my idea. I persisted. At last I was directed to a psychologist—let us call him Professor Sidney Stone—who specialized in the "learning abilities of adults." I made my speech:

"We want to be of use. There are recreation centers for 'senior citizens' to keep them off the streets, to keep them from going mad in their lonely rooms. But I speak for the old who have brains and intelligence. We are not interested in finger painting and other childish hobbies. We don't want to kill time; we want to use it."

Professor Stone gave me a long, reflective look and said that he was trying to develop an intelligence test for older people. He suggested that if I could get together a group of women around my own age, we might start a "workshop on aging."

It takes six simpletons and one zealot to start a movement. I began recruiting among my friends and fellow has-beens, acquaintances from the reading room of the Public Library, from the cafeterias and the park benches—wherever lonely old people begin talking to one another without introductions. Some had pensions, annuities, social security; one had a family inheritance; a few existed on dwindling savings and others on public welfare. Their enthusiasm was almost unanimous.

We gathered for our first seminar with name tags pinned to our shoulders, looking up at the professor like children on their first day of school. "You are an unusual group of women," he began. "You have the intelligence to voice your own problems and to help us understand the old who cannot speak for themselves. You can throw light on one of the major dilemmas before us today—how to use the potentialities of the old." He was a plump, middle-aged man with a fringe of graying hair around his bald spot, but to us he represented youth, charm, the opportunity to work and live again.

He leaned back in his chair, stroking his lapels. "Many approaches have been

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made to the problem of aging, but this discussion group is unique. It is to be a study of the old by the old. It is something new to meet a new need of our time. Science has salvaged scrap metal and even found vitamins and valuable oils in refuse, but old people are extravagantly wasted."

Charlotte Hicks, the ex-school teacher among us and the only one who had a notebook, was writing down everything the professor said. The rest of us could only look at him, devouring his words. They were like a bell, calling us to prayer; his genial smile made us feel he saw something special in each one of us. "We cannot tell in advance whether we can solve your personal problems right now," he concluded. "We cannot promise you anything except the satisfaction of working together for something that concerns us all."

The professor rose and the first seminar was concluded. We followed him from the room like a dutiful congregation after an inspiring sermon. Things were indeed looking up. I flung my arms around dour Mrs. Monahan.

Our second session began with questionnaires—age, family history, former occupation, education, how do you feel about growing old? I sat with the blank forms in front of me, thinking about the past. I grew up at the turn of the century, before child labor laws or compulsory schooling. Brief night-school courses in English had only sharpened my hunger for education. Then (could it have been forty years ago?) I stumbled into writing—novels about my experiences in the sweatshops of the Lower East Side. A brief, incredible success in Hollywood was followed by long years of groping, trial and error, and finally silence. Suddenly, shocked, I found that old age was upon me. Editors who had encouraged me were dead. My stories had faded into period pieces. A new generation of writers was creating a new literature.

We handed in our questionnaires. Professor Stone turned on the tape recorder and leaned back in his chair. He talked into a tiny microphone: "When does old age begin?"

Charlotte Hicks, sixty-nine and the youngest of the group, was the first to speak. She hadn't felt old, she explained, until she applied for a tutoring job at a teacher's agency and was told to say she was fifty instead of sixty-five. Charlotte snatched off her glasses. She was in a rage. "That man told me to lie!"

Kathleen Monahan, who had the worries of the world in her wrinkled face, was incredulous. "Holy Mother! What's a few lies? I tell 'em every day. Is there anyone in this room who doesn't? When my social worker comes snooping around, asking how I spend my money, can I tell her everything?"

The professor did his best to restore order and bring the ladies back to the subject. I said that feeling old was not a matter of years and Rose agreed by defining old age as the time where there is nothing left to look forward to.

Kathleen Monahan eyed Rose's blue cashmere sweater and expressed the view that those who had gone through the hell of home relief probably had less time to feel sorry for themselves.

Alice, the oldest, intervened as peacemaker. She had outlived the doctors with whom she had worked, outlived what the depression had left of her family fortune. Nearly eighty, she had been forced to go on relief.

"I wasn't aware of age," she said with a slight smile, "until I was seventy-nine and walked up the stone stairs of the Welfare Office to apply for Old Age Assistance. I worked for the poor all my life. But not until I was one of them did I see what goes on under the name of charity."

We did not look at one another. The only sound was the mechanical purr of the tape recorder. Professor Stone watched us in silence.

Alice turned to Kathleen. "You know that Old Age Assistance provides hardly enough for food and rent. The morning paper, news of what's going on in the world, is as necessary to me as coffee for breakfast. I made ten dollars knitting a sweater and was so proud of it I showed the case worker the money I earned. The next month ten dollars was deducted from my check."

Derisive laughter at Alice's innocence was followed by a storm of indignation. We all began to talk, outshouting each other.

"Ladies! Please!" Professor Stone called us to order. "Pensions are not the subject

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here. We're wasting time." He paused. "Instead of dwelling on your grievances, have you ever thought of volunteering your services to your neighborhood community center, church, or hospital? In helping others we touch something greater than ourselves."

Anger and disappointment were in every face but Alice's. No one spoke. The closing bell put an end to the embarrassing silence.

IN THE street I burst out. Was our work then worth nothing? Why should we volunteer? Just because we're old? The very thing we needed was the self-respect that comes with getting paid for working.

At our next session, Professor Stone picked up a glass, partially filled it at the water tap and opined that there were negative and positive ways of looking at everything. The glass, for example, could be considered either as half empty or as half full. It was up to us. Even if this country abolished forced retirement and prejudice against the old, what would each of us then be able to do?

Alice was the first to see what he meant. "I could be a clinic receptionist as long as I didn't have to stand. Or I could work in a doctors' telephoning service."

The other ladies took up the cry. Kathleen could still "cook in six different languages," and even the usually silent Rose Broder debated her chances of becoming a chaperone or housekeeper.

"When you think of your positive assets, you conquer your prejudices against old age," Professor Stone continued. He turned to Charlotte, whose face had grown fixed and still while the others were talking. "Miss Hicks! What are your positive assets?"

"My thirty-five years of teaching," Charlotte retorted in her clipped schoolteacher's voice. "Methods of teaching change, of course, and my eyesight isn't as good as it used to be. But what made me a good teacher is still in me. My age is the one unpardonable sin."

Minerva Neilson stood up and sorrowfully took the floor. "I was a columnist for thirty years. My column in our hometown paper was the first thing anybody read. When the editor died, his grandson took over. 'We need a change,' he said. 'We want something new.' " She wiped her eyes with her knuckles like a child. "The young have overrun the world."

"All that you ladies have said only accentuates the importance of thinking positively," the professor concluded. "The body weakens with the years, hearing, sight and speed lessen, but the power to serve is ageless. . . ."

And so we went from week to week. Professor Stone would open every session with a smile, greeting us approvingly, secure in the confidence that our project was the opening wedge in an entirely new approach to the problems of old age. He reassured us that as a result of the facts that were being recorded, a revolution against compulsory retirement would be initiated. Facts, the professor said, "have a power and vitality of their own." By way of reply, Minerva Neilson stood up one day in class, her scarf as usual thrown with studied artlessness over her shoulders, and told the professor that if she did succeed in getting a book published, she'd dedicate it to him. Grateful and embarrassed, the professor seized his briefcase and dismissed us five minutes early.

The tape recorder never stopped purring. What is "intelligence in the old"? What is "creative maturity"? How can we learn to "think constructively"? Our discussion trailed off into abstractions and the professor's words sailed higher and higher over our heads. If we could only stop talking, I thought sometimes, and meet in silence as the Quakers do, then maybe he would finally understand.

The dreaded last day of the seminar came. Professor Stone walked in, smiling as always. "Are old people too close to death to be able to talk about it freely?" he began. "A social worker told me to avoid the subject when speaking to the aged. But your attitude toward death is an important aspect of our inquiry, so I deferred the question until we had the broadest possible orientation."

As usual, Charlotte Hicks, the youngest, was the first to speak. "I could die tomorrow. It wouldn't matter. Nobody needs me; nobody would care." She was suddenly on her feet. "I just can't stand the sight of old people! Why don't they just finish us off quickly, instead of prolonging our uselessness!"

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The professor's pencil point broke with a loud snap. It was out at last! An odd, reckless excitement possessed the room. At last, after all those months of talking, somebody had said what we all felt. (Were we jealous of Charlotte's comparative youth? Were we glad to discover that she was in the same boat with the rest of us? Perhaps —but there was more to it than that.) Charlotte snapped off her glasses and tapped them lightly against her hand. "From childhood on I was taught to save—to save for a rainy day, to save for the future. Well, now I've got my pension—but what's the use of living without being able to work?"

Kathleen Monahan had the final say. "I can't quite imagine myself under the sod, not yet. There's an old saying: the young may die, the old must die—but not me." Why are we wasting time talking about death, I wondered. *How are we going to live until we die?*

Professor Stone fumbled with his papers, his face gray and tired as if all the old women in the room had inflicted their impotence on him. There was, regrettably, no time to answer these questions, he said. The fact that we could still ask them, though, was encouraging. He glanced at his watch, took a deep breath, and offered us his concluding remarks. We had started something that, developed and expanded, might lead to great changes in ways of dealing with the problem of old age. Our discussions and case histories were only the first of a series, and these already comprised over a thousand pages of data. When these were analyzed and collated, a report would be drawn up that would no doubt be of great benefit to future students of gerontology. This was only the beginning. He thanked us for the insights he had gained from our seminar and expressed the hope that it had been "a profitable year for us all." One by one we bade the professor goodbye, and filed out.

Unwilling, or afraid, to disperse, we made our way as a group to the school cafeteria. We sat around a table, mute as mourners, sipping tea. "We talked our heads off—for what?" asked Kathleen Monahan.

"For a thousand pages of research," I replied.

"He had a job to do and he did it," said Alice, calmly.

"So our seminar was only a job to him?"

"We were only statistics to him," said Charlotte Hicks. "Dots on a graph." Methodically she began tearing the pages from her notebook, watching them flutter to the ground.

"His heart," said Minerva Neilson, "is wired to a tape recorder."

Kathleen Monahan stood up and took hold of her shopping bag. "What dopes we were. A whole year wasted, only to find out the professor don't know nothing."

"What did you want him to do?" Alice asked. "Be God? Make us young again?"

"Where do we go from here?" I asked.

ANZIA YEZIERSKA'S *book of sketches,* Hungry Hearts, *was published in 1920 and established the author's reputation as a chronicler of Jewish immigrant life. She last appeared in these pages with a story, "A Chair in Heaven," published in our December 1956 issue.*

* * *

THE "RETURN" OF EUROPE'S JEWS

Edouard Roditi

ONE OF THE most puzzling recent developments on the European literary scene has been the growing popularity, in Central and Western Europe, of books on specifically Jewish themes. In Poland, France, Italy, Holland, and especially in West Germany, novels and other works, even if of a somewhat sentimental order which, before 1930, would have appealed almost exclusively to Jewish readers, have become best-sellers with a predominantly non-Jewish reading public.

The strange appeal of these books at this time raises questions: does their popularity represent a gesture of atonement or, rather, some morbid nostalgia for the absent victim? Is anti-Semitism actually dying out or, for a lack of Jews, must it now satisfy its appetite with fictional scapegoats? The fact that a good deal of this literature presents the most blatant Jewish stereotypes seems to give weight to the second possibility.

In West Germany, the revival of interest in Jewish culture is both most conspicuous and, for obvious reasons, most questionable. What is the meaning, for instance, of the fact that Insel Verlag's reprints of pre-Nazi

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German translations of Sholem Aleichem have now turned out to be best-sellers? Before 1930, these translations were popular only with a large German-Jewish reading public that no longer exists. Who is buying them now, and why? Nor is this interest limited to literature. As Gerald Reitlinger pointed out in *The Economics of Taste*, the best market for Chagall reproductions is now West Germany, where his prints in particular are very popular and often decorate the living-rooms of middle-class Germans who, before the war, would certainly have found such examples of the East-European Jewish tradition alien in the extreme.

Perhaps the most absurd case of West Germany's new interest in *Yiddishkeit* has been the enormous success of a very mediocre collection of East-European Jewish jokes, Salcia Landmann's *Der Jüdische Witz* ("The Jewish Joke"), published by Walter Verlag in 1961, with a witless sociological commentary by the author and a tepid introduction by the Social Democratic leader, Professor Carlo Schmidt. In a somewhat bad-tempered but justifiably critical article in the October 1961 issue of *Der Monat*, the Viennese-Jewish novelist Friedrich Torberg, editor of *Forum*, pointed out the very disturbing implications of the success of this book which, as he showed over and over, tells many of its time-honored Jewish jokes incorrectly, missing their point, when not actually distorting them beyond recognition. Torberg concludes that Salcia Landmann has "murdered" the classical Jewish joke, diluting its Jewish content and substituting an anti-Semite's stereotyped notions of Jewish humor for traditional Jewish irony and self-criticism.

The very ambivalent nature of West Germany's attention to Jewish matters becomes particularly clear in an otherwise undistinguished novel, Melita Maschmann's *Die Aschenspur* ("The Traces of Ashes"), published in 1961. Here a few typical representatives of the newly prosperous German middle class confront the recent past in the persons of two German-Jewish refugees whom they chance to meet while vacationing in Spain and on the French Riviera. The husband does not "look Jewish," is homesick for Germany, and has little difficulty in becoming reconciled with postwar Germans; his wife, on the other hand, broods over the past, suspects any German she meets of being the one who denounced or murdered her own mother, and refuses to adjust at all to the "realities" of the present. As for the Germans portrayed in the novel, several of them dispose with disconcerting ease of their own memories of having witnessed Nazi atrocities without protest and even of having been "forced" to participate in them. The moral of the tale is unmistakable: let the former victims follow the example of their former persecutors and forgive and forget the unpleasant past.

IT IS Poland, however, that is the source of several of the most curious recent examples of literary reconciliation or "adjustment" to the "realities" of the present. As part of the general rediscovery of the avant-garde of the 20's and 30's that has characterized the post-Stalinist thaw, there has been much interest in the very strange writings of Bruno Schulz, a Galician Jew from Drohobycz who wrote in the Polish language though in the Expressionist visionary mode of Robert Walser, Alfred Kubin, and Franz Kafka, rather than in any strictly Polish tradition.

Shortly before the outbreak of the war, Schulz had been awarded one of the Polish Academy's national prizes for his first book, *Sklepy Cynamonowe* ("The Cinnamon Shops"). Nevertheless, he was not granted false papers or other special protection by the local Polish Resistance, when the Nazis occupied his native city. Left to his own devices, Schulz managed for a time to keep alive by selling drawings—he happened to be an art teacher and artist also—to an art-loving German Gestapo official, until he was finally shot on the streets in the course of the rounding up of the last remaining Jews of Drohobycz.

All of Schulz's writings that could be found after the war were published with great success in Poland, and other European publishers were quick to issue them in translation. With more enthusiasm than accuracy, many French, German, and Polish critics have compared Schulz's nightmarish elaborations of childhood memories to the philosophic allegories of Kafka—perhaps because both writers were Jews and shared a similar social milieu, Prague and Drohobycz having both once been part of the

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Austro-Hungarian empire. Actually, Schulz was more of a surrealist in his deliberate cultivation of the child's, or psychopath's, ability to transpose and elaborate reality in terms of purely personal hopes, fears, and obsessions. A more informed critical approach would suggest analogies with the visionary prose of De Quincey or Lautréamont or with Kubin's *Die Andere Seite* ("The Other Side"). In any case, there is food for speculation in the fact that this dark, highly personal, and by no means unequivocal evocation of a vanished Austrian-Jewish milieu so fascinates contemporary Europeans—and especially the West German avant-garde.

Another recent Polish best-seller, Jozef Makowski's *Wehrmachtgefolge,* illustrates more sharply the ambivalent nature of present Polish-Jewish relations, or rather, of present relations between surviving Polish readers and the Jewish ghosts that appear to be haunting them. It is a picaresque novel about the adventures, in Nazi-occupied Europe, of two Warsaw Jewish *schlemiels* who decided to "go underground" as volunteer civilian workers for the German Wehrmacht. Concealing their identity, they survive quite comfortably, moving about freely on dubious travel orders and taking full advantage of all sort of German military accommodations in the spreading confusion of the Fuehrer's tottering empire. There is something tasteless, if not frankly inhuman, about the "humor" of this book which milks laughter from the farcical exploits of its heroes and with no alteration in tone simply states—along with other comic inventions—that one of the hilarious protagonists tends to brood over the fate of his mother, abandoned in the Warsaw ghetto. If the classical Jewish *schlemiel* type can be made sympathetic to postwar Polish readers only in so dubious a context, some readers might almost prefer more traditional anti-Semitic stereotypes.

Nations less haunted by ambivalence offer no such examples of literary insensitivity. In Holland, for instance, the loss of nine-tenths of the nation's Jewish minority is openly mourned. Everywhere one hears complaints about how the Dutch press has deteriorated for lack of Jewish contributors, or how the Dutch world of entertainment, for lack of Jewish wit, is no longer what it used to be. Amsterdam's Jewish Museum has thus become an important and popular department of the city's treasury of local historical documents and relics, and books about the Jewish community of Amsterdam in its heyday like *Joden in Amsterdam* ("Jews in Amsterdam") or *Jerusalem van het Westen* ("Jerusalem of the West") have proved in the past couple of years to be popular as gifts.

Though Dutch translations of recent foreign best-sellers on Jewish themes generally sell quite well, Dutch authors so far have not exploited Western Europe's present preoccupation with this subject. Nor have Dutch publishers shown any particular interest in certain minor classics of the prewar era—like the two-volume chronicles of Amsterdam's Jewry of the turn of the century, *Het Geslacht der Santelianos* ("The Santelianos Family," last published in 1918), by Joost Mendes—or the more remarkable play *Aron Laguna* (1927), written by his brother, Israel Querido. Partly a comedy of manners, partly a study of family conflict, this play is written in the obscure Portuguese-Jewish dialect spoken by the Sephardic proletariat in late 19th-century Amsterdam. It is doubtful whether a contemporary audience could still understand this curious version of Dutch, enriched with Spanish, Portuguese, even some Italian and Hebrew words; the play, like the segment of Dutch-Jewish life it represented, seems lost beyond recall.

ITALY, on the other hand, has in the last few years been engaged in a passionate reexamination of its almost extinct Jewish communities. Ever since the last quarter of the 19th century, Italian literature has had a strong tradition of populist-regionalist *verismo* or realism (the works of the Sicilian novelist, Giovanni Verga, are the greatest example), and, since the end of the war, the Italian Jewish communities—especially of Ferrara and Trieste, with their unique literature, customs, traditions, and idiom—have come to be regarded as self-contained provinces or regions, in a sociological, rather than geographical, sense.

Italian Jewry was first rediscovered in this way a few years ago, when Mondadori began reprinting Italo Svevo's long-neglected fictional chronicles of the very as-

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similated Italian-Jewish upper bourgeoisie of Trieste. Throughout the Fascist era, Svevo's great novels and tales attracted little attention in Italy, though their author, who died in 1928, had already achieved some fame in France, England, America, and Germany, largely through the efforts of his friend and supporter, James Joyce. Svevo's novels deal in a period of the past that is already safely remote both from the present and the Fascist era preceding it. *La coscienza di Zeno,** *Senilità*† and *Una Vita* ("A Life") are reprinted as classics; they provoke no controversy. More interesting in this respect are the works of Georgio Bassani, whose novels and stories are about the Jewish bourgeoisie of Ferrara during the years of Fascist persecution.

Bassani was first a lyric poet, whose short stories began appearing about ten years ago. Not since Italo Svevo and the early Alberto Moravia had so scrupulous an analysis of the psychology of the Italian-Jewish upper bourgeoisie been attempted. But while Svevo, Moravia, and—more recently—Natalia Ginzburg never dealt explicitly with their characters as Jews, Bassani deliberately focuses upon the Fascist period and the years that preceded and followed it in order to analyze the gradual alienation of Italian Jews from the social order in which they had believed themselves to be as fully integrated as any other Italians of the upper middle class.

Bassani's *Cinque storie ferraresi*** was followed by a long short story, *Gli occhiali d'oro.*†† This strange autobiographical tale is set in Ferrara, during the early stages of the Fascist regime when anti-Semitic legislation was first beginning to affect the lives of prosperous middle-class Italian Jews. But its chief character, who is hero and victim, is not a Jew: Dr. Fadigati is a kind of provincial Italian Baron de Charlus, a homosexual physician who is finally driven to suicide after being ruthlessly exploited and blackmailed by a cynical young athlete who turns out in the end to be both a Fascist and an anti-Semite.

In Bassani's hands this incident, which occurred in Ferrara when he was a boy, is broadened into a study of how the totalitarian mentality works—and of its need to punish non-conformism in any guise. He thus uses the story to establish the close connection that exists between all forms of sadistic intolerance.

Bassani's third published volume of fiction, *Il giardino dei Finzi-Contini* ("The Finzi-Contini Garden") is a full-length autobiographical novel about the narrator's adolescent love for a mysterious girl with whom he becomes acquainted when Fascist persecutions bring about a temporary rapprochement between the girl's patrician Sephardic family and the lesser middle-class Jewish families of Ferarra, including the narrator's own. Disdaining the path of assimilation followed by many Italian Jews, the Finzi-Contini family had chosen instead to lead a life of aristocratic apartness, associating neither with gentile nor Jewish neighbors, even maintaining an ancient Sephardic synagogue for their private use. When Fascist persecutions begin, the Finzi-Contini alone among the Jews of Ferarra are unsurprised—they had always considered themselves "different." Nevertheless, in a gesture of unprecedented solidarity, they begin to appear at the public synagogue, and gradually they turn their luxurious home, surrounded by a vast private park, into a gathering place for the Jewish young people of the city, excluded by this time from all public social functions. For a time their home serves as a magical oasis, an island of peace and decorum in the midst of the Fascist nightmare; then the idyll ends, the group of friends is forced to disperse, the family is broken up and its members sent off to separate deaths in distant extermination camps. After the war, their abandoned and looted home is converted into a barracks for the homeless, their park becomes a wilderness, their splendid family mausoleum in the local Jewish cemetery becomes a veritable symbol of desolation. The author continues to be haunted by memories of a boyhood romance and of its mysteriously romantic setting. Bassani's novel is a kind of Proustian "remembrance of things past," on a small scale.

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* Published in English as *The Confessions of Zeno* (Vintage).

† Published in English as *As A Man Grows Older* (New Directions).

** Published in English as *A Prospect of Ferrara* (Faber).

†† Published in English as *The Gold-rimmed Spectacles* (Atheneum).

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The exquisitely nostalgic character of Bassani's writing raises it far above the level of most recent European fiction on Jewish themes. He describes a world which was inevitably doomed, a past that had no hope of surviving into the present. Fascism only hastened its dissolution, destroying it brutally and all at once whereas, left to itself, it would simply have faded away, doomed by assimilation and the childless marriages of an increasingly ineffectual and decadent Jewish bourgeoisie. In describing the manners and customs of his Italian-Jewish provincial childhood, Bassani even seeks to save from oblivion those peculiarities of speech and cuisine that contributed to the flavor of Ferrarese-Jewish "regionalism."

(Is the Italian Jewry of Livorno, of Rome's Campo dei Fiori, or of Ancona, like the Greek Jewry of Castoria, Larissa, Yanina, or Corfu, doomed to vanish for lack of a chronicler? In the abandoned library of a deserted *yeshivah* in Yanina, a few years ago, I was shown a large collection of Hebrew texts that nobody could even catalogue any longer, many of them written in a Greek-Jewish dialect but in Hebrew script, so that knowledge of both Hebrew and of Epirot demotic Greek would be necessary to decipher them. The Portuguese-Jewish dialect of Amsterdam is already extinct, as are the Greek-Jewish dialects of Northern Greece; the dialects of the Italian-Jewish communities have died out in my own lifetime; the Ladino of Salonica and Istanbul, containing words borrowed at random from Turkish, French, Italian, and Greek, is rapidly becoming an almost incoherent private language, surviving in only a few families.)

Another Italian Jewish writer, the modest *"anonimo triestino"* (his name is said to be Voghera-Fano), follows Bassani's example in *Il Segreto* ("The Secret"), an autobiographical novel set in pre-war Trieste. Like Bassani, though without his lyricism, the author chronicles a lost adolescent love, meticulously evoking the details of a time and a way of life that have now virtually vanished. The protagonists of both these autobiographical novels—like the heroes of the novels of Italo Svevo—are the classically ineffectual *schlemiels,* whose fate is, however, rendered more poignant by the events of recent history that shattered their familiar worlds, whether in Ferrara or in Trieste.

Encouraged by the success of these two new Italian-Jewish authors—Bassani's novel sold 150,000 copies—Feltrinelli in 1962 reprinted Fausta Cialente's *Cortile a Cleopatra* ("A Courtyard in Cleopatra"), whose background is the Italian-Greek-Jewish-Armenian-Arab community of a pre-war Alexandrian slum. First published in 1936 without the success of Lawrence Durrell's more ambitious chronicles of the Alexandrian "international set," this unpretentious little story has much of the droll charm of another polyglot cultural product of pre-Nasserian Cairo-Jewish life: Bob Azzam's oriental jazz recordings of such popular Arab songs as *Sheesh-Kebab* or *Mustafa.*

Fausta Cialente's second novel, *Ballata levantina,** is more ambitious, covering the lives of three generations of women, denizens of the Alexandrian international set. Beginning in the halcyon era of wealth and high living at the time of the building of the Suez Canal, the novel spans the intervening years to finish in Cairo and Alexandria during World War II. Though rather old fashioned in technique, *Ballata levantina* offers a more accurate description of the social mores of the vanishing Levantine or non-Moslem life of Alexandria than Durrell's somewhat mythomanic chronicles. In addition, the author has faithfully recorded the difficulties that once beset those Italian emigrants who refused to capitulate to the pressures of Fascism exerted after 1922 by official and semi-official Italian organizations and by the more conformist elements of their own community. As in the works of Bassani and of the *"anonimo triestino,"* the reader soon becomes aware, in Fausta Cialente's novels, of a nostalgic sense of doom in describing the once rich and colorful life of cities which now seek to rid themselves of all "foreign" elites.

So MANY dirges, sung in so many languages and lands, for vanishing or vanished Jewish communities lead us to conclude that racial and religious minorities must serve a unique purpose in the social, economic, and cultural life of cities and nations. In Ger-

* Published in English as *The Levantines* (Houghton-Mifflin).

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many, Poland, Holland, Italy, and Egypt, the Jews, like other minorities, supplied a valuable leaven of non-conformism and individuality. Because of the more complex and ambiguous nature of their relationship to the society in which they lived, they tended, whether as businessmen, intellectuals, or even entertainers, to be more critical, more receptive to new and foreign ideas. The economy of nations deprived of this leaven may soon stagnate, even as a devastating boredom begins to afflict their cultural life. Remembrance of things past—as in the literary trends I have attempted to describe in the preceding pages—then comes to haunt these nations, almost as a species of collective neurosis.

EDOUARD RODITI, *the well-known poet and art historian, was last represented in* COMMENTARY *with "Chagall's Windows," published in our February 1962 issue. His most recent book is* Dialogues on Art, *published in New York by Horizon Press.*

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES

The Interpretation of Hasidism	MARTIN BUBER
A Choice of Profession—A Story	BERNARD MALAMUD
New York's Irish—Then and Now	DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN
Nasserism Today	A. V. SHERMAN
America and the World Revolution: A Round-Table Discussion	LEWIS A. COSER OSCAR GASS HANS J. MORGENTHAU ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR.

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The Jewish Musician—II

To the Editor of Commentary:

As a non-Jewish musician who has had close contact with the creative aspects of Jewish music—I was Schoenberg's pupil for three years—I was deeply disappointed in Albert Goldman's article ["The Predicament of the Jewish Musician," February].

In discussing Mendelssohn, Mr. Goldman has succumbed all too easily to . . . the stereotyped image of that composer as "ever-happy," light, graceful, superficial, even histrionic. In fact, his previously unpublished correspondence, not to mention unbiased examination of the music itself—gives us a far different picture. In Eric Werner's forthcoming biography, based to a great extent on these unpublished materials, . . . we see, for example, that Felix and his father did *not* hesitate to discuss religious matters in their correspondence when it was necessary. . . . A striking example is Abraham Mendelssohn's letter to Felix of July 8, 1829, in which he fully sets forth the reasons why Felix should take as his own the name of Bartholdy rather than Mendelssohn. . . . How can Mr. Goldman claim that Mendelssohn's relationship to Protestantism was "social and cultural rather than religious"? . . . A faithful disciple of Schleiermacher, he testified his allegiance to the Lutheran Church often and impressively. Otherwise he could never have created church music so truly Protestant in attitude and spirit as is his beautiful "German Liturgy" (alas, now in an oblivion from which it should be rescued). . . .

As for comparing Mendelssohn with the ineffable "Lennie": . . . Bernstein *is* "histrionic"—Mendelssohn never was.

Turning to Mr. Goldman's discussion of Mahler, . . . he might at least have given this composer his correct birthdate (1860, not 1864). It is ironical that Mr. Goldman should say, "He never produced the musical counterpart to *Faust, Part II* . . ." for the most powerful existing musical setting of *Faust*'s final scene is precisely the Finale of Mahler's "Eighth Symphony." Of course Mahler had to struggle to find himself (and would doubtless have been torn by conflicts even had he not been Jewish); but to deny him the power of expression of "a world that might truly belong to him" is simply to deny the existence of such works as "Das Lied von der Erde," the "Ninth Symphony," and above all the "Tenth." . . .

Discussing Schoenberg, Mr. Goldman again falls into clichés and inaccuracy. To say "His compositions have never appealed to listeners" simply will not do any more. A work like "Verklaerte Nacht," not comprehended at its première, is today, of course, a part of the standard repertoire. . . . But how about "A Survivor from Warsaw" which had to be played twice at its New Mexico première because of enthusiastic audience acclaim? What about "Moses und Aron" which was one of the most performed works in German opera houses during the past season? The myth that Schoenberg's works do not "exist . . . to be played or heard" is effectually demolished everywhere that they *are* played or heard (instead of just talked about).

Dika Newlin
Drew University
Madison, New Jersey

To the Editor of Commentary:

In answer to Albert Goldman, I would first dispute that Jews virtually dominate the world of music today; they may be prominent and perhaps proportionally represented to a greater extent than non-Jews, but they are still a minority—the impressive list of Jewish musicians and virtuosi and Mr. Bernstein's popularity notwithstanding. As to the reasons for their failure to be really great, the answer probably lies more in the world scarcity of Beethovens and the greater frequency of Mendelssohns, Meyerbeers, or for that matter, Aubers, Thomases, von Suppés, and Humperdincks, than to any quality of alienation that Jews are particularly heir to.

Furthermore, it is probably a matter of arranging facts to fit the theory to say that Mendelssohn could only feign Christian piety and was thus unable to write sincere (i.e. good) Christian religious music. Converts are notably more fervid in their religion than the majority of those born to

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the faith. It is interesting here to make a comparison between Berlioz and Mendelssohn, who first met in Rome in 1830. Berlioz, who was a Catholic by birth and an atheist by reflection, with his conversational blasphemies and free thinking, shocked and outraged the pious Mendelssohn—as we learn from Mendelssohn's own letters. But the atheist Berlioz wrote far better religious works than Mendelssohn, "L'Enfance du Christ," for example, though his main interest in Christianity was in its poetry, not its doctrines. Can it be seriously maintained that only sincere believers can write great religious works? Was J. S. Bach more devout than Pachelbel or Buxtehude? . . .

Mendelssohn's failure to fulfill his early promise is in all likelihood only tangentially due to the cultural difficulties of assimilation. Rather it could be that it was a direct consequence of his too firm attachment to what seemed to him sound and solid: a sound religion, devoutly held; solid musical principles of respectable tradition but of dubious merit. Not a lack of sincerity but the unfortunate attempt to imitate Bach and Handel through an entirely different sensibility was the cause. . . .

May I suggest further that Wagner's statement is the sheerest nonsense. His writing so often skirts the edge of gibberish that when an intelligible passage appears it tends to be vastly overrated and overpondered. . . . Can anyone explain just why the great artist must be a "true expression of the spirit of his nation"? What does Berlioz, or Baudelaire, or Delacroix reveal about the True France that is truer than the popularity of Béranger, Adam, or Delaroche? . . . And what about Stravinsky, of what forgotten or imaginary land does he express the spirit? Would to God that Goethe revealed the spirit of Germany! Isn't it rather that the time, the culture, and the country are revealed in the great artist because he is what he is and *he* is the center of our interest? I think this is more likely than that the artist is great because a national spirit happens to speak through him (or poor because it cannot).

(Dr.) Charles E. Cherubin

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

To the Editor of Commentary:

The erudition of Albert Goldman is impressive, but his intellectual ability and his knowledge are rendered useless by his inability to keep his ears open to the emotional messages of the Americanized Weill and most of Bernstein. . . .

I would agree that "Threepenny Opera" is a masterpiece, untouched by any contemporary work. But Weill's genius was not only for translating Brecht's criticism into musical language—it also captured the full flavor of nostalgia that ties us to the past. . . .

Bernstein also deals with the current reality, makes it easier to understand and expresses in musical terms the feelings of his audience. . . .

Philip D. Merwin

New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Apart from his musical opinions, one must question Mr. Goldman's basic argument—in effect, that the value of music written by Jewish composers has been affected primarily by the fact of their being Jewish. This is an intriguing argument, but purely speculation. Mr. Goldman offers not a shred of substantiation beyond his own musical likes and dislikes, and one suspects that these are a product of—not a basis for—his theory. Certainly, to be a Jew in a gentile world must affect a composer, his attitudes, and his music. But to focus on this influence to the exclusion of manifold others seems like basing a theory on the wooliest sort of over-simplification.

William Kaplan

Ann Arbor, Michigan

To the Editor of Commentary:

In order to prove his doubtful theory that the strength of Jewish artistry lies in interpretation rather than creativity, Mr. Goldman downgrades the composers he discusses and uses certain facts in support of his argument while omitting others of equal significance. . . .

The paleness of Mendelssohn's oratorios compared to those of Handel results not from his religious orientation, but from the fact that the most convincing Protestant musical expression belongs to the Baroque rather than the Romantic era. Mendelssohn belonged to the third generation of a family of assimilated Jews; he was a German composer and if there is any question of religious affiliation in his music, it is certainly Protestant rather than Jewish. And why should Mendelssohn's sacred choral "failures" be attributed to religion at all? Schumann, that very German Romantic composer . . . the forms of whose musical output somewhat resemble those of Mendelssohn, failed at opera as Mendelssohn did at oratorio.

Meyerbeer is criticized for being an imitator rather than innovator. . . . What about

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Cherubini and Spontini and the countless others who flocked to Paris to compose French opera? Even Wagner's "Tannhäuser" evinces a slight French operatic influence. While there is much to criticize in Meyerbeer's work . . . he must surely be credited for his dramatic power, masterful instrumentation, breadth of imagination, and flair for the stage. If Meyerbeer has been out of fashion, two reasons are that his roles are fiendishly difficult to sing and production costs for his grandiose operas are very high. Berlioz's operas have hardly fared better, and he was a gentile Frenchman, writing French opera in Paris. . . .

Offenbach similarly deserves more credit than Mr. Goldman gives him. Coming to Paris . . . at the age of fourteen, to study at the *Conservatoire* under Cherubini, he was certainly young enough to grow into a French composer. . . . He originated a kind of 19th-century version of 18th-century *opera buffa,* the *bouffes parisiens,* which remains incomparably alive and fresh. The Viennese type of operetta . . . owes its existence to this earlier French form.

One could say about Mahler, Schoenberg, etc., that in their artistic orientation they possessed typical (as Mr. Goldman himself admits) as well as unique characteristics. But this may be said of every musician —or other artist, frequently because he is also an interpreter, or because of the changing political and cultural climates. . . .

If Kurt Weill in the 1940's in America had continued to compose in the vein of Germany of the 1920's, instead of turning to musical comedy, he would surely have been termed old-fashioned. He outgrew one style (no doubt his most original period), suited to a particular time and place, and began to work in another idiom, in which, one must admit, even if one doesn't care for musical comedy, he excelled. . . . Perhaps Weill was pressured into musical comedy by financial considerations. Composers must eat too. Beethoven promised and sold compositions to several publishers before they were composed.

Leonard Bernstein is hardly comparable to Mendelssohn; he is considered by the majority, and probably by himself, as a conductor first. Numerous performers have also been composers, including Schnabel, but they are remembered as interpretive artists. Mendelssohn was distinctly a composer; his various other accomplishments were secondary. . . .

RUTH BERGES

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mr. Goldman says many perceptive things about the adjustment of Jewish composers to their respective audiences, but I take objection to his rather summary statements about the quality of their works. . . .

Goldman's statements about Meyerbeer, for example, lead one to believe that he has heard little of Meyerbeer's music and that he has merely fallen in with the views so prevalent for decades, that Meyerbeer was completely worthless as a composer. He hasn't been doing any recent investigation in the field, I'd say.

Now I'm no more of a musicologist than Mr. Goldman . . . but I am a rather rabid collector of operatic music and member of a group of "opera buffs" who meet regularly to hear one another's recordings. Unfortunately for our pleasure (and Mr. Goldman's argument, I think) no complete recording of a Meyerbeer opera exists as yet. All we have to go by (and he too, presumably) are oldish to ancient recordings of individual arias, many of them superbly done and hardly likely to bolster Mr. Goldman's thesis. . . . Unfortunately, except for the *Shadow Waltz* . . . hardly anyone has recorded Meyerbeer for thirty to forty years, but I don't think that matters to the argument. . . .

I must also add a protest about Mr. Goldman's treatment of Offenbach. . . . Mr. Goldman is not fighting fair when he places that composer's treatment of love in the "Barcarolle" category. . . . Let Mr. Goldman get a libretto of the "Contes," listen through the whole work, and see if Hoffmann's loves are not poignantly and even touchingly expressed in his *"O Dieu, de quelle ivresse"* (Act 2) and almost the entire third act. Even his self-delusion in the first act (with the mechanical doll, Olympia) rings true. Why must he demolish Offenbach's reputation with fainter praise than he merits?

MORRIS SPRINGER

Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Though Mr. Goldman cannot claim to be a musician, he can claim to be a member of a rapidly growing class in our society. Made up mostly of music critics at present, it can be called the Foot-in-the-mouthers, the This-stuff-won't-last, the I-predict-that-in-fifty-years-group, who have already separated the Men from the Boys, to save the 21st century the trouble of doing so for itself. Hence Arnold Schoenberg is damned with

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faint praise as a great intellectual, but as a composer, well. . . .

Argument: he calls Schoenberg "less artist than intellectual," thus denying to the creative artist any benefit of intellectual process. . . .

Argument: "His compositions are best regarded as demonstrations of his theory . . . difficult and interesting experiments . . . designed to test and promote radically new ideas." . . . Here Mr. Goldman is treading close to "intentional fallacy" ground.

Schoenberg's twelve-tone theory may or may not be embodied in a particular work (if you can always recognize a tone row, in any of its forms, you're a better man than any musician alive).

Here Mr. Goldman makes the common error of equating an artist's *method* of organizing his piece with his *style*, or particular way of implementing his musical ideas. A twelve-tone piece is not inherently abstract, dissonant, angular, "difficult," or "ugly," any more than a conventional tonal piece is necessarily concrete, readily grasped, concordant, smoothly lyrical, or beautiful. The internal relationships in a contrapuntal chorus by Bach or in a Brahms symphony are, objectively speaking, no less calculated, contrived, or theoretical, as a basis for formal organization, than a twelve-tone piece. What we hear in any given work is not the relationships per se, isolated from their context, but the treatment of musical ideas in a particular style. . . .

Even if, by some fluke, Schoenberg had admittedly "experimented" with a piece, it is far from our concern. If we allow the composer's "intention" to affect our hearing and evaluation of the work, it would be like giving an "E" for effort, or "N" for a noble cause. We would be forced then to give a failing "F" to a late Beethoven quartet, since it was intended as the last movement of another late quartet. And so the "Unfinished Symphony," the Mozart "Requiem," etc., etc. . . .

"Test and promote radically new ideas"? Utter nonsense. Schoenberg in the opinion of composers and students who knew him or studied with him, was one of the most skilled, proficient musical craftsmen who ever lived. At any given instant he knew perfectly well what he wanted and what the result or sound would be.

"Promote"? Schoenberg wrote books to promote his theories; he wrote music to promote his art. . . .

Argument: "Schoenberg's works exist to be pondered as profound aphorisms of musical wisdom rather than to be played or heard." Here Mr. Goldman is in the company of those modern critics who believe that the new developments in musical notation should be framed and exhibited in a gallery rather than given the benefit of live performance. . . .

After dismissing Mahler as lacking in artistic integrity, Goldman gives top honors to Kurt Weill, who, by his own admission, could never "develop along the lines indicated by his natural gifts"—though he had much more time to do so than Keats, Schubert, Chopin, Mozart, Pergolesi. . . .

I would like to join, briefly, the Foot-in-the-Mouthers, by saying that in fifty years, if Mr. Goldman is unusually lucky, he may be remembered in the same way we remember Schopenhauer's mother.

(Mrs.) Eric Salzman
Brooklyn, New York

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . I agree with Mr. Goldman's concept of the inability of the Jewish creative artist to offer a genuine contribution to his adopted country, but I wish to take exception in the case of George Gershwin. He is considered one of the most "typically American" composers. . . .

(Mrs.) Eva Lang
Hartford, Connecticut

To the Editor of Commentary:

The article . . . espouses a commonly accepted variant of Hitlerian philosophy: "Once a Jew, always a Jew." To be sure, Mr. Goldman avers that to be a Jew is good, but . . . this does not change the point.

The tabulation of notables who have consciously and purposely disavowed their Jewish ancestry is impressive, yet many Jews refuse to accept this distasteful reality. Can we rightly claim the proselytes as Jews when they themselves denied it in deed and action during their mature lives? Are we who remain Jews so poor in pride that we merely regard their decisions as the acts of misguided children? . . .

Mendelssohn and Mahler may be singular composers but there is little justification for Jews to revel in their fame as *Jewish* musicians.

Meyer M. Markowitz
Ardmore, Pennsylvania

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . For Mr. Goldman to accept the childish anti-Semitic arguments of Richard Wagner . . . that the true artist has to ex-

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press the spirit of his nation, is sad indeed. . . . True, Mendelssohn's oratorios have weaknesses, but not because his ancestors neglected to be German Protestants like Bach's and Handel's. Mendelssohn was the first composer who attempted to incorporate earlier music in his compositions, for example, Bach and Handel. This assimilation process did not come off. After all, Handel created his greatest works in a completely different cultural atmosphere from the one he was born in. What happened to Handel's "national roots"? Was his music German, English, or Italian? What does it really matter? . . .

In order to support his theory Mr. Goldman discusses only Leonard Bernstein as a prominent American-Jewish composer. Are Copland and Gershwin less American-Jewish than Bernstein? After all, Gershwin wrote the only American folk opera to endure, and his use of jazz in serious music was of far-reaching importance.

The composers of today, including the ones in Israel, have little interest in writing national music. The modern Israeli composer, like his colleagues in Western Europe, Japan, or the United States attempts to write music which has universal validity and is free of provincial clichés.

DAVID BERGER

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Although Mr. Goldman has given a high polish to the old clichés about Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, and Offenbach, it was not the Jewish situation which prevented them from becoming greater than they were. They are to be judged in positive terms by their unique contributions to music and not by what they might have been if. . . .

The "blandness" of the text to Bloch's "Sacred Service" (*Avodath Hakodesh*) is accounted for by the English adaptation. . . . The Hebrew text, generally used in performance, is anything but bland and offers enough inspiration for Bloch's "barbaric and opulent style." Let me point to *"Shema, Mi Chamocha,"* the end of the *"Kedusha and Lecha Adonai."*

In the case of Schoenberg, Mr. Goldman found himself in a tight corner. Jewish composers, traditionally followers, have suddenly produced a leader. How then extricate oneself? . . . One calls on the unfailing magic of terminology and pulls a Schoenberg out of the hat who is mainly a theorist, not really a composer. I admire the early Weill. But crediting him with the "greatest artistic achievement" is a desperate conclusion no musician would seriously consider.

. . . I find it amazing to watch a Jewish writer dancing to Richard Wagner's pipe. *Das Judentum in der Musik* has shaped Mr. Goldman's view and he . . . judges Jewish composers through the distorting lens of an avowed anti-Semite.

Music, in Wagner's sense, is elevated language. The main burden of his argument . . . is that a Jew can never truly learn the language of his adopted country, and therefore cannot make a valid contribution to its musical culture. This is manifest nonsense, sprung from selfish, political motives . . . ranking no higher than, for instance, Alfred Rosenberg's *Der Mythos des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts,* which was supposed to give spiritual meaning to Hitler's barbarism.

The synagogue may well supply the roots which the Jewish composer, according to Mr. Goldman, has not yet found anywhere else. Mr. Goldman will remember that Wagner himself, in his treatise, suggests the synagogue as the only source, the "Jehovah Cult" as the only musical expression possible for the Jewish composer.

HERBERT FROMM

Boston, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Goldman's . . . evaluation of such composers as Mendelssohn, Mahler, Schoenberg, Bloch, Bernstein, and the others, is surely not to be taken seriously. Their reputations are already well enough established not to be damaged by such unwarranted . . . attacks, and no twisting and turning of the facts can fit them into the strait-jackets that he imposes.

It is quite the opposite from the way Mr. Goldman states his case. . . . By what authority he makes the statement, "Cultural adaptation of the Jewish musician seldom transforms his *own* soul" is hard to determine, except that he evidently bases it on the ideas of Richard Wagner, for whose shopworn anti-Semitic arguments he voices such respect.

This Nazi-type of thinking insults the present day with echoes of . . . wholly discredited racial theories, which, appearing under non-Jewish auspices, would cause violent repercussions on the part of Jewish organizations. . . . As it is, this article will provide chapter and verse for the future anti-Semitic leaders.

In fact, Mendelssohn was a key figure in the German Romantic movement, along

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with Heine. . . . "Porgy and Bess" is generally considered the first American opera, and is already a classic. Milhaud, Offenbach, and Saint-Saëns are accredited French composers. The Copland of "Appalachian Spring" is as American as Mark Twain. Bernstein's "Fancy Free" and "West Side Story" are strictly Americana. Why downgrade the Jewish composer with all this parochial, ghetto-ridden hogwash? . . .

GERALD F. WARBURG

New York City

MR. GOLDMAN *writes:*

I was prepared for disagreement with my evaluation of Jewish composers and with my interpretation of the problems of the Jewish creative artist; however, I should never have believed—until I read these letters—that a serious effort to understand this question would provoke such reckless misinterpretation, such an intellectually and morally opprobrious effort to discredit the writer by associating him with Hitler and the Nazi philosophy.

That Jews should adopt such tactics in the discussion of a cultural issue will appear to some as a sad but inevitable consequence of the calamities of modern times. I regard these ugly imputations differently; to me they signify a sorry loss of pride and dignity, a mechanical partisanship that reduces to the motto: whoever is not with us is against us. If this is the manner in which criticism is to be received, one can be certain that in time no one will venture to make an honest effort at it, lest he be subject to irresponsible defamation.

De Gaulle and Humanity

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Hans J. Morgenthau ["The Crisis in the Western Alliance," March] describes but one side of the coin in stating that de Gaulle plans an independent nuclear force to defend France if we should falter at nuclear suicide. Such a force, allied with West Germany, could be used for offensive purposes, to compel German reunification, for example, and to retrieve the East Oder lands.

True, as Mr. Morgenthau says, de Gaulle has exploded the myth of the NATO alliance, but will he and Adenauer lead us to a more stable Europe? . . . The more countries in possession of the bomb, the greater the danger to all. Though I am opposed to monopolies, in this case a monopoly by the U. S. and the USSR seems the best interim solution until the happy day these two can come to terms on control and disarmament. Such agreement will be made infinitely more difficult with France and Germany in possession of nuclear weapons.

De Gaulle's recent moves do not enhance the chances for peace—every other consideration pales into insignificance.

MORRIS YANOFF

Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The metaphor invoked by Hans J. Morgenthau to describe the current nuclear situation—"if you do this, I shall cut off your leg . . ." is appalling, coming as it does from one of the most humane and conscientious of foreign affairs "realists." When analysis can reduce 20 million people to a leg, 45 million lives to a life, genocide has come of age.

Herman Kahn (we thought) was an extreme example. Have the Hans Morgenthaus, too, lost their humanity? Or has Morgenthau perhaps in his humanity developed a shorthand to ease the moral burden of his profession?

It is terrifying that on such deadened perceptions may rest the outcome of the human endeavor. It is disheartening to see Morgenthau in the same pages with Erich Fromm, Paul Goodman, H. Stuart Hughes, and yet sense that there is no common language between them.

PAUL SCHAFFER

New York City

Private Eyes

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Richard Schickel's article ["Raymond Chandler, Private Eye," February] provided a rare breath of fresh air in a dusty and neglected area of contemporary fiction. For those of your readers interested in this vital but critically slighted field, a few emendations and corrections of Mr. Schickel's remarks may be in order. . . .

It was not Dashiell Hammett who invented the first real private eye in the modern sense (technically, Sherlock Holmes was the first); his Sam Spade followed by some years the private eye character created by Carroll John Daly in the 20's, who worked out of his own little office for hire and who experienced all the qualms and bitterness of being boycotted to a large extent by organized society, including the police. Hammett's Continental Op was not a true private eye; he worked for a large San Francisco detective agency, as did Hammett himself,

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and was under directional orders from his employer in the home office. Too, Hammett's novel writing was not limited to four years, as Schickel has it, but to just under seven—the novels first appeared in the old *Black Mask* magazine (except for *The Thin Man,* which appeared in *Redbook*), and the earliest antedated book publication by some years. . . .

I would like to refer Mr. Schickel and any interested readers to the novels of Ross MacDonald and his private eye, Lew Archer (name lifted from Sam Spade's murdered partner in *The Maltese Falcon*) which Knopf has been publishing for over a decade, in which the values of Hammett and Chandler have been superbly upheld by a writer of sensibility and taste. . . . In the estimation of many, including Anthony Boucher, MacDonald surpassed both Hammett and Chandler in characterization and subtlety of narrative content. Like them he is being critically ignored; unlike them, he doggedly continues writing in the teeth of critical neglect.

WILLIAM E. BLACKBEARD

Los Angeles, California

Norman Mailer's Hasidism

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Mailer's commentaries on the *Tales of the Hasidim* [December 1962; February 1963] brought to my mind a rabbinic story. . . .

It is the one about the author who came to a famous rabbi seeking an endorsement of his interpretation of the Book of Proverbs. The rabbi, after studying the manuscript, advised the man to apply his efforts instead to the Book of Job. Job, he explained, was the victim of so many afflictions in his life, it would scarcely make a difference were he to suffer yet another indignity.

I can well understand that Mr. Mailer's meditations are a form of abstract modern art, demanding a special sense of appreciation; however, implicating the masters of Hasidism in this strange mental exercise, is an imposition these saintly souls need not suffer.

If there is any relationship between these efforts of Mr. Mailer and those of the Hasidic rabbis, it is one of opposites, for . . . they considered it their mission on earth to save the "holy sparks" that had strayed from their original source and fallen into pollution.

SOL MUHLSTEIN

Norwalk, Connecticut

Defense of A Lady

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I enjoyed H. Stuart Hughes's article "On Being A Candidate" [February], but much as I appreciated his candid expressions of post-campaign feelings and thoughts, I must protest his description of Mrs. Elizabeth McCarthy, one of Massachusetts's (and the country's) leading handwriting experts.

As an attorney, I feel it my duty to state that Mrs. McCarthy is held in the highest professional esteem by attorneys, judges, and other persons engaged in handwriting analysis, and that I deem it extremely unfair to a person of her high caliber to refer to any "shenanigans by Mrs. McCarthy."

Her integrity is certainly reaffirmed by her failure to find any discrepancies in the signatures for Mr. Hughes.

HASKELL SHAPIRO

Dorchester, Massachusetts

Faith and Marriage

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his review of *The Ghetto Game* [January], Staughton Lynd misconceives the nature of prejudice, or of marriage, or both, in the illogical statement: "Brotherhood . . . would mean intermarriage between races, and intermarriage between faiths." There is no natural or rational reason against intermarriage between races. . . . But is one lacking in brotherhood because he insists that his prospective spouse share his convictions as to the nature of God and man's destiny? . . . Adherence as an adult to a particular faith signifies at least an implicit position on such matters. To marry out of one's own faith (or one's own political party, for that matter—faith's worldly counterpart) testifies not to a sense of brotherhood, but rather to a lack of commitment, or perhaps a misunderstanding about the ultimate implications of such a decision.

JOHN J. KIRWAN

Washington, D. C.

Correction

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In your May issue ["Letters from Readers"] a reference to Mr. Nathan Glazer was erroneously included in my letter concerning the American peace movement. I did not, however, make any personal references in that letter.

AMITAI ETZIONI

New York City

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NEW FRONTIERS

THE POLITICS OF HOPE. By ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR. *Houghton Mifflin. 298 pp. $5.00.*

Reviewed by LEWIS A. COSER

THIS collection of essays, written in the 1950's and early 1960's for a variety of magazines, reflects the amazing catholicity of Mr. Schlesinger's tastes and interests. His range is wide indeed. There are pieces here on the virtues of dissent (written in the age of Eisenhower) and pieces on the need for greatness and heroic leadership (written at the onset of the Kennedy age). Mr. Schlesinger has discussed the Oppenheimer case (in the *Atlantic*), Whittaker Chambers (in the *Saturday Review*), and in *Esquire* he raised the question, "What has unmanned the American man?" Other essays comment on the careers of Walter Lippmann and Reinhold Niebuhr, on the causes of the Civil War, and on numerous other subjects. This variety makes an assessment of the book difficult enough; the difficulty is compounded when one realizes how much Mr. Schlesinger's role on the intellectual scene has changed during the period covered. He used to be a critical and unattached intellectual. He is now attached —to the White House. Hence one must distinguish carefully between the old Schlesinger and the new, even though the book's organization, topical rather than chronological, plainly was not meant to invite such distinctions.

The earlier pieces, those written in the 1950's, continue in the vein of the author's *Vital Center*. They show a genuinely curious and troubled mind trying painfully to define a new liberal politics after the collapse of some of the traditional liberal certainties. Persuaded by Reinhold Niebuhr of the futility of utopian visions in an immoral society of sinful men, Mr. Schlesinger here attempts to define the lineaments of a new pragmatic liberalism in tune with realistic requirements and the conduct of practical affairs. Aware of the stubborn recalcitrance of political facts before the grand schemes of certain of the older liberal thinkers, Mr. Schlesinger counsels caution, a politics of responsibility, a plunge into the course of history rather than a desperate struggle against its current. If his translation of the somber pessimism of certain theological thinkers into the idiom of high-level political journalism often sounds rather shallow, this is perhaps not entirely Mr. Schlesinger's fault. He evidently does the best he can. And it remains that certain of these essays, those on Lippmann, De Voto, Niebuhr, and Chambers, for example, are perceptive, engaging, and sympathetic examinations of the life and thought of these men. In addition, certain of the polemical pieces of the 1950's—against the New Conservatives, against *Time*'s disparagement of intellectuals, against those "revisionist" historians who would persuade us that the Civil War could have been avoided had everybody but been a bit more reasonable—are fine examples of the polemicist's craft. But all these are products of a phase of his career which Mr. Schlesinger has now left behind. His newer pieces are no longer questioning and tentative; instead, they bristle with new-found muscular certainties.

The new style reveals the new man. Invigorated by the sweet taste of power, Mr. Schlesinger writes now with aplomb. His more recent essays abound in "forward motion," "revived national energies," "faith in leadership," and long strings of similar clichés. Take, for example, the essay on "The New Mood in Politics," written in 1960. Here Mr. Schlesinger assures the reader that "From the vantage point of the 60's, the 50's . . . will seem simply a listless interlude, quickly forgotten, in which the American people collected itself for greater exertions and higher splendors in the future."

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Does this sound like political analysis or does it sound like campaign oratory? In fact, it *is* campaign oratory, indistinguishable from the highfalutin speeches of Mr. Schlesinger's master and hero—which, come to think of it, were at least partly written by the same author.

The old Schlesinger often probed deeply and was aware of the complicated ambiguities of political action. The new Schlesinger has wholly succumbed to self-congratulatory certainty. He can now write: "Our national leadership is young, vigorous, intelligent, civilized, and experimental. . . ." All this is a bit hard to take, coming as it does from the pen of a man whose official address is The White House. Were there no self-employed trumpeters available?

The new Schlesinger, perhaps because of what John Dewey called "an occupational psychosis," seems to have developed a trained incapacity to perceive the somber side of the American experience in the 1960's. His complacency is formidable. He can now write, for example: "There are still pools of poverty which have to be mopped up; but the central problem will be increasingly that of fighting for individual dignity, identity and fulfillment. . . ." Some pools these! A spate of recent books—see Dwight Macdonald's superb discussion of them in a recent issue of the *New Yorker*—have shown that at least one-fourth of the American population still lives in poverty. Reading Mr. Schlesinger's cultivated prattle about identity, fulfillment, and the like, one cannot help recalling Bertholt Brecht's *"Erst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral."* Brecht was often vulgar, but at least he was never smug.

IF ONE is to believe Mr. Schlesinger, a truly remarkable transformation has occurred in America within a very short time span. In 1958 it was "a pompous society," the 50's were a "decade of inertia [when] we squandered, for example, a commanding weapons' lead until our own officials now frankly concede that by the early 60's the Soviet Union . . . will have a superiority in the thrust of its missiles and in the penetration of outer space." Things were falling apart, and the vital center did not hold. But enter the 60's and everything has changed: "We have awakened as from a trance; and we have awakened so quickly and so sharply that we can hardly remember what it was like when we slumbered." The old Schlesinger was much given to attacks against the alleged "deterministic" explanations of sociology and to the vindication of "human freedom"; but the new Schlesinger's belief in indeterminacy runs riot. Everyone has the right, I suppose, to invoke "heroic leadership" and to believe in the seminal and history-making actions of great men. But Mr. Schlesinger abuses the privilege. It is asking a bit much to have us believe that the mere advent of Mr. Schlesinger's employer on the scene has, as with one wave of a magic wand, changed the major characteristics of an era and of a society. This is no longer social analysis, even if it is dressed up in terms of an alleged law of historical alternation between Innovation and Conservatism "discovered" by Mr. Schlesinger's father a generation ago; it is just plain *chutzpah.* Are we really to believe that mass society with all its attendant signs and characteristics suddenly disappeared from America at the moment John F. Kennedy and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. entered the White House? "Few," writes the author, "would describe American society any longer in last decade's condescending vocabulary of conformism and homogenization." Is he kidding himself or is he trying to kid us?

Finally, I wish to comment on Mr. Schlesinger's leading essay which carries the pretentious title "On Heroic Leadership and the Dilemma of Strong Men and Weak People." This is an important essay, not because it says anything important, but because it seems to express the ideology which is now dominant among the President's intellectuals in Washington. Here Mr. Schlesinger calls for a reconstitution of democratic theory, since "maintained in rigid purity, it has been an abundant source of trouble." The citizen in a democracy, he says, simply cannot play the role in which classical democratic theory has cast him. This has led to political estrangement and frustration. Hence, Mr. Schlesinger argues, we need to rely on heroic leadership, we need to divest ourselves of our instinctive distrust of such leadership if the democratic polity is not to flounder in a sea of mass emotions. This, I submit, is a detestable doctrine.

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I share Mr. Schlesinger's view that the American political process has been characterized in recent years by a devolution of democracy, and that at least one of the major reactions to this has been an increase in political alienation. But Mr. Schlesinger's heroic leadership doctrine, far from decreasing this alienation, would make it a permanent condition. It would institutionalize reliance on the tutelary powers of a government headed by heroic leaders. We would then truly have reached the condition that de Tocqueville always feared would threaten democratic nations: "As each member of the community is individually isolated and extremely powerless, no one of the whole body can either defend himself or present a rallying point to others; nothing is strong in a democratic country except the state." In such a condition, de Tocqueville thought, "the people shake off their state of dependence just long enough to select their master, and then relapse into it again." According to Mr. Schlesinger, the crisis of democracy can be cured only by a strong injection of personalist appeals by a political hero. This is a pernicious remedy. What is needed is *more* participation in decision-making by the citizens, not less. If existing institutional restraints prevent such wider participation, they will have to be abolished. In the meantime, lunch-counter demonstrators and Freedom Riders, not Schlesinger's managerial demiurges, maintain one's faith in the possibilities of democracy. The future of democracy in America is tied to the chances of breaking up those illegitimate and irresponsible centers of power, both economic and political, which have grown up within the interstices of the democratic polity, and which effectively thwart the exercise of democratic decision-making, even as they strangle economic growth and equal access of the whole population to the good things of life. So far, one waits in vain for Mr. Schlesinger and his Washington co-thinkers to even mention, let alone deal with, this problem. Unless they do so soon, one will be forced to conclude that all this talk about heroic leadership is an ideological smokescreen behind which business can be conducted as usual.

All that I wanted to convey in this review has, in effect, already been said, and in the book itself. It occurs in a passage from Walter Lippmann's *The Method of Freedom* which Schlesinger quotes in his essay on its author: "It is only knowledge freely acquired that is disinterested. When, therefore, men whose profession is to teach and to investigate become the makers of policy, become members of an administration in power, become politicians and leaders of causes, they are committed. Nothing they say can be relied upon as disinterested. Nothing they teach can be trusted as scientific. It is impossible to mix the pursuit of knowledge and the exercise of political power and those who have tried it turn out to be very bad politicians or they cease to be scholars." So be it.

THE TIDES OF CHANGE

IN SEARCH OF FRANCE. By STANLEY HOFFMANN, CHARLES P. KINDELBERGER, LAURENCE WYLIE, JESSE R. PITTS, JEAN-BAPTISTE DUROSELLE, FRANÇOIS GOGUEL. *Harvard University Press. 489 pp. $8.95.*

Reviewed by J. G. WEIGHTMAN

IN THE inter-war years, there was a popular English journalist called J. B. Morton who wrote a series of highly emotional, subjective travel books under the title: *In Search of. . . .* I don't remember whether he did France, but he certainly produced *In Search of the Holy Land* and *In Search of Scotland.* The first thing that strikes me about this Harvard volume is how remote it is from such facile, individual lyricism. Not only is it the work of five professors (four American and one French), but unlike most symposia, it was composed in collaboration. The five sections are the fruit of two years of seminars in America, to which various eminent people were invited, followed by an equally eminently attended study conference in Paris. To guarantee the reliability of the operation still further, the book contains its own built-in criticism in the shape of a commentary by M. François Goguel, Secretary-General of the French Senate, on the five preceding chapters. The whole undertaking can, therefore, be praised as a monument to academic thoroughness and fair-mindedness. One sometimes wonders why politics and govern-

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ment remain such a haphazard affair when so many experts now devote themselves impartially to the elucidation of social problems. If a few thousand copies of this book were distributed free in France, would they not help the French to find themselves? A dozen copies should certainly be sent to President de Gaulle and his entourage.

Before summarizing the general thesis of the book, with which it is impossible to disagree, I may as well clear away those incidental points about which I have doubts. Although French culture, especially the literary culture, is mentioned on several occasions as being exceptionally important, the volume contains no contribution by an expert in French literature, language, and philosophy. If some such person had been present at the seminars, he would, for instance, have prevented Professor Wylie's attributing the play, *Topaze,* to Jules Romains, when in fact it is by Marcel Pagnol. He would have brought out the significance, even for the technological elite, of such didactic literary figures as Alain, Valéry, Gide, Malraux, Camus, and Sartre. And I think he would have queried, more vigorously than M. Goguel does, the first part of the chapter, "Change in Bourgeois France," in which Professor Pitts makes some sweeping generalizations about French psychology.

Professor Pitts's theories are the only part of the contents of the volume which make me scratch my head and conclude that either he must be quite wrong about some things or I must have been very imperceptive during the last thirty years. He sees France as being essentially Catholic, and he divides the Catholic tradition into two trends: the "doctrinaire-hierarchical" and the "aesthetic-individualistic." These seem to correspond more or less to what I would have called the "Catholic-authoritarian" and the "humanistic-free-thinking" strains, and I cannot see why Professor Pitts wants to link the second as well as the first to Catholicism. It is true that there are all sorts of cross-connections between them. Authoritarian centralism, for instance, may be as much a feature of the secular Left Wing as of the Catholic Right, but this is because, at the Revolution, the new men inherited an already centralized state, which was still further centralized by Napoleon. On the other hand, a certain kind of republicanism may be just as characteristic of the Right Wing as of the Left. One of the most puzzling features about de Gaulle is that, in spite of playing fast and loose with parliament, and behaving like a monarch and sending congratulatory telegrams to the Orleans-Braganza family, he is, in his own peculiar way, a republican, who can sound the appropriate note when occasion requires. There is a Voltairean wit and a free-thinker in him, as well as a Right-Wing Catholic, and this helps to explain how he can be all things to all men and enjoy such liberty of maneuver. I see no reason to doubt the normal division of France into Catholic and non-Catholic, provided we remember that the two strains have influenced each other for generations. On the whole, individualism has been characteristic of the secular, rather than of the Catholic, tradition, in spite of such religious individualists as Huysmans, Léon Bloy, Charles Péguy, and Simone Weil; in any case, the last two are almost as representative of secular as of Catholic France. Professor Pitts does not bring out the fact that the majority of able Catholics go through the state schools, where they imbibe a great deal of the anti-Catholic tradition. I think he seriously underestimates the strength of secular France.

At the same time, I fancy he overestimates the survival of the aristocratic ethos. He makes great play with the concept of "prowess," which I have never heard mentioned in France. The word exists mainly in the plural, in the phrase *"faire des prouesses,"* which is usually ironical and can be applied, for instance, to sexual proficiency. I cannot follow Professor Pitts when he says:

> The creation of a piece of jewelry by a Parisian craftsman, the peasant's careful distillation of a liqueur, the civilian's stoicism in the face of Gestapo torture, Marcel Proust's suave gallantry in the salon of Madame de Guermantes—all are examples of prowess in modern France.

The first two phenomena are related not so much to an imaginary "prowess" as to the survival of the notion of craftsmanship and individual endeavor in a society which escaped the wholesale regimentation of the

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Industrial Revolution. Jewelry, like wrought-iron or cooking or dress-making, is aristocratic in the sense that the standards reached during the *ancien régime* (and especially during the 18th century, under that ex-bourgeoise, Mme. de Pompadour, when France set the tone in luxury for the rest of Europe) have never been quite forgotten. In Great Britain, we have such standards in hand-made men's shoes, Savile Row tailoring, and malt whisky, but certainly not over a wide range of crafts. What Professor Pitts calls "prowess" may be a survival of the artisan spirit, or a manifestation of the individualistic tradition of wangling which naturally develops in a centralized state, or a sign of sturdy republican independence or Napoleonic adventurism, or the quixotic gallantry of *la vieille France*. These various things may intermingle in a bewildering way. If you dine, for instance, at the table of a Fifth Republic *préfet*, in a palace built by Napoleon III, the meal will normally be reminiscent of 18th-century standards and will be presented with some of the formality of the *ancien régime*. The guests will be largely middle-class but with peasant roots. The military or diplomatic gentlemen may have a slight *vieille France* aura. The conversation will be middle-class, rationalistic, and realistic in a Napoleonic way, with many references to power politics, intellectual disciplines, and peasant wisdom. All this cannot be reduced to the few simple concepts employed by Professor Pitts.

HOWEVER, when Professor Pitts goes on to define the changes that have occurred in the bourgeois family, his reflections are more concrete and coincide with the findings expressed in the other chapters. The theme running through them all is that France has undergone a profound transformation since 1939. Before the war, the country was in many ways old-fashioned and content to remain so. Now it has been forced into the modern world, the population is growing steadily, industrialization is proceeding by leaps and bounds, agriculture is being modernized, family life and the general social pattern are undergoing surprising modifications, and France is again claiming the right to play a major part in world affairs. The problem, in each instance, is to decide how far-reaching the new developments really are, where they are leading, and whether they reinforce each other or to some extent conflict.

In the first section, Professor Hoffmann describes the stagnant equilibrium, the "stalemate society," of France since 1870. For generations, France had been run by the moderately prosperous middle classes whose ideological differences tended to cancel each other out. The essential social unit was the family, based on the possession of property and the economical administration of a relatively small income. A similar atomization of society was noticeable among the peasants, with their small holdings and their resistance to modern methods. In spite of the gap between the bourgeoisie on the one hand and the peasants and workers on the other, France could be termed a democratic country, because the mosaic of small sectional interests was a fair representation of the various traditions making up French society. The flaw in this democracy was, of course, that republican institutions expressed the diverse wishes of the population but kept the executive correspondingly weak. In the stresses of the postwar world, the hesitations of successive French governments in face of the internal and external problems produced a series of crises and—in connection with the Algerian question—almost led to civil war. Many Frenchmen have pressed for a strengthening of the executive. General de Gaulle, after an initial withdrawal from the political battle when he felt he could not impose his will on the politicians, followed by a twelve-year wait for a favorable opportunity to return, came back in 1958 with the paradoxical support of the various groups of contenders, each of which supposed the General to be on its side. At first, the General moved very cautiously toward a solution of the Algerian problem, a task which lasted more than two years. Having completed it, and having eliminated all institutional opposition to his personal reign, he is free to put into execution his "grand design" for the building up of France as the chief European power, capable of existing independently of America. Whether this is proof of political realism or of mythomania, and whether the country as a whole is really prepared to follow de Gaulle all the way, are very debatable points.

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Also, says Professor Hoffmann, and in this he is echoed by others, the political question of government remains unsolved, because de Gaulle's presidential regime is a personal one, which may very well disappear with him. What form of regime will emerge when he has gone, it is impossible to foresee.

It seems certain, however, that the technological and sociological changes described in the other sections are irreversible. Professors Wylie and Pitts emphasize that the total family unit is no longer as important as it used to be—that is, parents and grandparents have lost the authority they once enjoyed. Arranged marriages have practically disappeared, and the new qualification of technical expertise and potential earning power is replacing the old conception of property and the prudent administration of small businesses. French family life remains more authoritarian than its English or American counterparts, yet the whole social structure is being loosened up. As Professor Kindelberger shows, one reason for this has been the emergence of so many "new men" in the field of industry and economic planning since the end of the war. A large proportion of the older generation was discredited by compromise during the Occupation; the younger men suffered very few casualties and were psychologically prepared to introduce reforms after the Liberation. Hence the development of a strong "managerial" class, which lays stress on long-term development, mechanization, collective groupings, international trade agreements, and so on. Economic expansion has not been uniform over the whole country, but it has been spectacular.

After pointing out the changes and indicating reasons for them, each section ends on an inconclusive, interrogative note: whither France in the immediate future? This is not merely because professors of politics and sociology tend to eschew forecasting and to content themselves with the analysis of accomplished fact, outside the framework of any optative philosophy; it is also because there has perhaps never been a time when the future of France was less foreseeable. The country has begun to move, but its relations with itself, with Europe, and with the rest of the world are so uncertain that an endless number of combinations is possible. No one, not even de Gaulle's closest associates, expected him to romp home at the last elections, and there were many red faces among the *préfets* who had reported on local opinion. But de Gaulle's own instinct is not infallible, since, when faced with the miners' strike only a few months after this success, he signed the order requisitioning the mines and provoked nationwide opposition just as complete as his former nationwide success. The General's position is really based on an interlocking system of misunderstandings, and it is anybody's guess how that system will break up. However, France is not unique in moving shakily and uncertainly into the future. The observer watching from across the Channel is conscious that his own background is evolving rapidly and unpredictably. Every day, there are things in the press and on television programs which make even progressive, middle-aged Englishmen wonder where their country is heading. Perhaps, to clear the ground, the Harvard Center should now go on to produce a companion volume entitled "In Search of England."

ECONOMISM

THE MAKING OF ECONOMIC SOCIETY. By ROBERT L. HEILBRONER. *Prentice-Hall. 241 pp. $4.95.*

THE GREAT ASCENT. By ROBERT L. HEILBRONER. *Harper & Row. 189 pp. $4.00.*

Reviewed by E. F. SCHUMACHER

THE FIRST OF Mr. Heilbroner's two new books is "an attempt to present some of the basic content of economics in [the] mingled light of theory and history." This is a most commendable undertaking and is quite successfully accomplished, even though the theory remains rudimentary and the history somewhat patchy. Mr. Heilbroner has a rare gift for organizing his wide knowledge in an easily readable form.

The second book—*The Great Ascent*—is really an expanded version of the last two chapters of the first, dealing with "the struggle for economic development in our time." Again, history and theory are nicely interwoven, and the result is an incisive

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exposition of a very great and baffling problem.

If I were able to place myself in the frame of mind of my student days, several decades ago, when I was taught to treat economics as an autonomous subject dealing with "a separate economic sphere of activity visible within, and separate from, the matrix of social life" (as Mr. Heilbroner puts it in *The Making of Economic Society*), I should applaud these two books wholeheartedly. But I cannot do this any more; I have gradually and painfully come to the conclusion that economics, and even more so economic history, when treated without reference to a picture of the Whole Man—body, mind, and spirit—is a snare and a delusion. To be sure, the separation of economics from the social "matrix" has proved its usefulness, and without it there would have been no science of economics at all. But if a thing is useful up to a point, it is an easy and misleading kind of logic to conclude that it must go on and on being useful even beyond that certain point. I am deeply convinced that this separatist approach has by now outlived its usefulness, particularly for any attempt to combine economic theory with *history*.

Max Weber, Tawney, and Schumpeter, Le Play, Durkheim, and Christopher Dawson, to mention only a few, have surely not labored in vain: how can we still look at the "market economy" as simply a cleverly designed control mechanism, competing for the efficiency stakes with two other "solutions of the economic problem"—the systems of "tradition" and of "command"? Yet Mr. Heilbroner invites us to do so:

> There is also a third solution to the . . . problem of maintaining socially viable patterns of production and distribution. This is the *market organization of society*, an organization which, in truly remarkable fashion, allows society to insure its own provisioning with a minimum of recourse either to tradition or command.

Surely, after Tawney and the rest, it will no longer do to discuss the "market economy" as the ingenious technical solution of a problem. And surely, history viewed as a "one-dimensional movement" from the darkness of poverty to the light of affluence, or from the hopeless stagnation of traditional society to the splendid activism of the market economy, is false and misleading history: we have had altogether too much of it; it blinds us and makes us treat with contempt the very sources of what is best in our own civilization.

Achieving the "true" market economy, according to Mr. Heilbroner, requires three fundamental changes:

1. The monetization of economic life will have to proceed to its ultimate conclusion.
2. The pressures of a free play of market "demand" will have to take over the regulation of the economic tasks of society.
3. A new attitude toward economic activity will be needed, . . . the idea that a general free-for-all should determine men's compensations, with neither a floor to prevent them from being ground down nor a ceiling to prevent them from rising beyond all reason.

Now, Mr. Heilbroner admits that the medieval mind would have rejected such an attitude as senseless and even blasphemous; but he gives no indication as to how he himself considers it, how he wants his readers to consider it, or how the best minds of the modern West have reacted and are reacting to it.

The author, of course, has every right to determine for himself what his book intends to be about. But that is just the point, for Mr. Heilbroner is not merely expounding economic theory. His very merit is that he has taken upon himself the obligation of expounding economic theory through the medium of history, and history is untruthful if it presents developments that have far-reaching metaphysical, religious, moral, or philosophical significance as if they were mere technical innovations. Historical facts, after all, are significant only for the meaning they convey. It is a kind of betrayal to hide the *meaning* of important changes in economic structure and to speak simply of alternative "solutions to the economic problem."

And then, in what sense and to what problem are we being asked to find the "market economy" a "solution"? "By the sixteenth and seventeeth centuries," says Mr. Heilbroner in *Economic Society*, "cash and transactions were already beginning to

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provide the very molecular force of social cohesion." But how on earth can we think of "cash and transactions" as forces for social cohesion? Nor has anyone ever before claimed that they are. What needs constantly to be emphasized about the market economy is precisely its disintegrating effect: how else can we understand the appearance of the various countermovements in recent times—socialism, communism, fascism and other forms of extreme nationalism, all of them reactions against this disintegration? If Mr. Heilbroner, disregarding the evidence of countless anthropologists, sociologists, and historians, really believes that what the *Communist Manifesto* calls "naked self-interest and callous cash payment" are forces for social cohesion, he should at least have argued the case in some detail. The late Professor Elton Mayo, for instance, found that among industrial workers just as among university students the number actuated by "motives of self-interest logically elaborated is exceedingly small. *They have relapsed upon self-interest when social organization has failed them.*" From this he concluded:

> It would seem that extensive social disorganization must be postulated before the laws of economics apply. In other words, our studies of economic fact are upside down.

Theory by itself, without the corrective of history, can easily get things upside down. But what can be served if, in the combining of these two, history is interpreted to suit the needs of theory instead of being used to control it?

IT WOULD be unfair to Mr. Heilbroner to suggest that he fails to see any weaknesses in the "market system." On the contrary, he devotes a considerable amount of space to them and comes to the conclusion that the market societies will have to depend a good deal on planning—just as the "command societies" will more and more find it possible and necessary to utilize certain of the market mechanisms. But the weaknesses he sees are only *economic* weaknesses, and the antidote is a purely economic one. No one reading Mr. Heilbroner's book would suspect that—by universal testimony—the weakness of the market society lies in its effects on the *sources* out of which all civilization, and the market society itself, grows—and that this form of society, still drawing on the cultural and spiritual capital of its ancestors, now faces ever increasing difficulties precisely because it is destroying this capital without putting anything in its place.

How terrible to teach young people "economics," i.e. the rationalization of the "pure" market society in its most inhuman, callous, and disintegrating form, without making it clear to them that no society of this kind has ever existed in the real world or ever could exist: the eager and credulous victims of such a teaching—and who has not met them?—thus take as normal and rational a small, mean, calculating, and grasping attitude to life and treat any attitude of generosity, magnanimity, or sympathy as irrational weakness and a fall from grace.

The need to do away with economism—with this sort of evasion of responsibility for the Whole Man—is all the more pressing today as Western economists are taking it upon themselves to transform and remake whole societies in the name of "economic development"; and this is the subject of Mr. Heilbroner's second book, *The Great Ascent*. So much in this book, too, deserves praise, particularly its refreshing air of political realism:

> It is one thing to engage America in the world-wide struggle for development on the assumption that a successful Great Ascent will strengthen the forces of democracy and capitalism, and another to ask it to engage itself in a struggle whose successful end-result is apt to be a growth of political authoritarianism and economic collectivism.

The latter is what Mr. Heilbroner is asking America—and the rest of the Western world—to do. We have to accept, he says, "the need for political authoritarianism and economic collectivism":

> To put the matter in its bluntest terms, *we must forge a foreign policy which begins with the explicit premise that democratic capitalism, as a model for economic political organization, is unlikely to exert its influence beyond the borders of the West at least within our lifetimes.*

And further:

> This is bound to place America in the difficult position of seeking to extend as-

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sistance to nations which are not only authoritarian and collectivist but which are more or less actively anti-American.

This kind of flatness and plainness and hard-headedness makes Mr. Heilbroner's book vastly superior to much of the literature on development aid, usually full of sentimental rubbish or technical pretentiousness. And yet, is not Mr. Heilbroner's "realism" somewhat perverted? Why should anyone be asked to spend money so as to be more thoroughly hated? Is this not again economism with a vengeance? "The basic theme of this book," Mr. Heilbroner announces, "lies in the belief that the Great Ascent is a supremely important enterprise which must command the hopes and efforts of every advanced nation." But why? How can an enterprise command our hopes and efforts, if the result is to be "the growth of political authoritarianism and economic collectivism," with a fine, active hatred thrown into the bargain? If this were really so, would it not be better to do nothing? Oh no, says Mr. Heilbroner, the consequence of inaction would be "the probable slow loss of prestige and leadership to the Communist world." If the West intervenes, it promotes the emergence of totalitarian and collectivist regimes and reaps a harvest of hatred; if it does nothing, it leaves leadership to the Communists: evidently it is "heads we lose and tails they win." If such were really the case, it would surely be more sensible to save oneself a lot of trouble and do nothing.

All Mr. Heilbroner's rhetoric cannot extricate us from the hopeless position into which his arguments lead.

> Yet if the Great Ascent is slow, cruel, even fearsome, it is also irresistible, stirring, grandiose. It is an avenue of history which, however difficult, leads from an eternity of dark suffering toward the possibility of light and life.

What, for goodness sake, is irresistible, stirring, or grandiose about the fostering of totalitarianism? An action that may be ill-considered will not seem less so even when it is dressed up in rhetoric like "avenue of history." What sort of history is it that dismisses the entire past of mankind as "an eternity of dark suffering," and what sort of philosophy is it that can identify totalitarianism, collectivism, and hatred of the democracies with "the possibility of light and life"?

Naturally, neither Mr. Heilbroner's history nor his philosophy approaches those I have characterized above. But his species of economic thinking—what I have called "economism"—simply denies his own first sentence in *Economic Society:* "Man, it is repeatedly said, does not live by bread alone."

In the end, Mr. Heilbroner has done little more than document the nature of our "'impossible situation": in which for us to follow the established pattern of aid to underdeveloped countries will be just as disastrous as to do nothing. To have documented our predicament is in itself immensely valuable, but the value of it is vitiated if what follows, as it does for Mr. Heilbroner, is merely the confident assertion that our present kind of foreign aid must therefore continue and be intensified. On the contrary, what must follow is the demand for an entirely new approach to "economic development"—an approach more humane and much more compassionate than anything inspired by economism. I hope that Mr. Heilbroner's next book will be on "Non-Destructive Foreign Aid."

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNISM

THE USSR AND THE FUTURE: ANALYSIS OF THE NEW PROGRAM OF THE CPSU. Edited by LEONARD SCHAPIRO. *Praeger. 324 pp. $6.00.*

POLYCENTRISM: THE NEW FACTOR IN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM. Edited by WALTER Z. LAQUEUR and LEOPOLD LABEDZ. *Praeger. 261 pp. $4.50.*

Reviewed by ROBERT V. DANIELS

GENERATIONS OF philosophers have underscored the old wisdom that just as one can never step twice into the same river, so in the flux of history there is nothing constant save the constancy of change itself. It should come as no surprise in the 1960's, therefore, to observe signs of change even within that leviathan known as the Communist bloc.

The facts of Communist change are puzzling only to people who subscribe to the Communist ideology or the inside-out

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version of anti-Communist ideology (evidently including some key U.S. government officials), and who, in either case, can see nothing but the rigid conformity of Communism to the Marxist-Leninist plan (something that has never yet happened in history). Up to now the inside-outers have taken the easy course of denying the evidence of Communist change, in order to avoid the trouble of rethinking their preconceived notions. The two books under review should be required reading for such people.

Admittedly, it is hard to know exactly what is happening in the Communist bloc because of the lack of unrestricted access, official control of public communication, and the mythical character of official statements. The Kremlinologist must work by inference from scraps of information and misinformation, somewhat in the manner of the specialist in medieval history. But, like the historian, he can often come to substantial truths. Both the Schapiro and Laqueur-Labedz volumes are remarkable examples of this difficult art.

A particularly weighty but medieval piece of evidence about the Communist bloc is the new (1961) Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Ostensibly this was a basic, epochal document, the first such since the long disregarded Party Program of 1919. Its meaning—or lack of meaning—has been thoughtfully analyzed topic by topic in the collection of critical essays by the eminent British Soviet historian, Leonard Schapiro, and his associates (mostly British and emigré Russian scholars).

THE Schapiro essays make it startlingly clear that the 1961 Party Program is no long-term guide in the literal sense, but merely a propagandistic position paper of the moment, distinguished more by its theoretical confusion and manipulative contrivances than by any genuine insight into the present and future of Communist society. The core of the Program, no doubt, is the "transition from socialism to Communism," suggesting that Soviet Russia is about to pass the threshhold into the blissful Marxian millenium. In reality these terms are only the cloudy expressions of the official mythology, manipulated to cloak the managerial industrialism of Soviet society in a suitable garment of utopian phraseology. When checked against the specific points in the Marxist dream, we find that the Party Program has redefined every substantive point, so as to evade the whole purpose of the movement's founders. Will money and inequality be abolished in the future "Communist" realm? No, because incentives must be kept, and some people with higher "requirements" will continue to be more equal than others. Will the state wither away? Only by transferring its functions to another organization with the same powers and a different name ("public self-government"). For the time being it is "the state of all the people"—an utterly un-Marxist expression, whatever its other implications. The Communist party, never mentioned by Marx in his plan for the future and hence not required to wither, is now declared to be a permanent fixture for the "Communist" order, and therefore we need look for no real diminution of totalitarian dictatorship.

Perhaps more immediate import can be seen in the Program where it reflects the growing centrifugal strains in the bloc of Communist countries. Here the crucial question—seemingly one of rabbinics or scholastic theology—is whether the official "transition to Communism" can be accomplished by one country at a time as soon as it is ready, or whether the transition must await the readiness of the entire bloc to embark upon it simultaneously. A very perceptive article by Christian Duevel in the Schapiro volume shows how the Program reflects Khrushchev's views of 1958 and 1959 on the "more or less simultaneous transition to Communism." However, the text of the Program in 1961 adds the qualifying phrase, "within one and the same historical epoch." What does this word game signify in reality? Disagreement between Soviet Russia and China, on the entirely different plane of practical economic aid. To hold that "Communism" had to be achieved simultaneously implied a commitment by the more advanced "socialist" countries to help the less developed ones construct the "material-technical foundations of Communism" and thus hasten the day when the whole bloc could go over the top. In 1958 and 1959 Khrushchev offered a theoretical promissory note as a gesture of conciliation toward his restive Chinese

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allies. By 1960 the power rivalry between the two Communist giants was overt and verbal within the councils of the movement, and Khrushchev suspended his Chinese aid program. Accordingly, the theory of the simultaneous achievement of "Communism" had to be loosened up, so that Russia could shrug off its aid commitments and let a whole "epoch" of untold decades or centuries intervene between the Soviets' imaginary claim of "Communist" perfection and any admission that the Chinese had reached the same level of virtue.

THE "transition to Communism" issue is but one example of the theoretical and tactical gyrations which the Communist movement has had to perform under the impact of international differences and rivalries within its once monolithic structure. This tendency toward national autonomy and "polycentrism" within the movement has been studied by numerous writers, but one of the most far-sighted and comprehensive treatments of the whole question is the volume of articles from the London bimonthly *Survey* brought together by Walter Z. Laqueur and Leopold Labedz. The editors and their associates—British, American, French, and West German experts, for the most part—have probed every aspect of the "polycentric" trend, in every quarter of the globe, to produce a complex but rewarding picture of the events, ideas, and circumstances which are disrupting the Communist movement at the present time.

The term "polycentrism" was coined by the free-wheeling Italian Communist chief Palmiro Togliatti in 1956. The word was a little too frank and has gone out of official Communist favor, replaced by vague references to "autonomy" and "equality" among the Communist parties, but the facts of polycentric development in the movement have grown even more undeniable (both to its leaders and its enemies). To be sure, polycentrism does not mean that Communist unity has suddenly been shattered or that open warfare is likely to break out between the chief Communist powers. Polycentrism clearly does mean, however, that the binding leadership and total doctrinal authority which the Soviet Union was able to impose on the international Communist movement throughout the era of Stalin has now come to an end. We can date this either from the consolidation of Mao's regime in China in the early 1950's, or from Khrushchev's de-Stalinization campaign of 1956. Whatever its motives, and they remain somewhat obscure, de-Stalinization had a shattering effect on international Communist discipline (and to some extent on loyalty). The central authority with its binding theoretical manipulations ceased to exist. While Stalin's dictation of ideology is gone, the Khrushchev regime, as Melvin Croan notes in *Polycentrism,* has not even managed to work out a theory to describe its leading role in the movement. In effect, the leaders of most of the Communist governments and of most of the non-governing Communist parties are free to work out their own plans and their own destinies, though of course many of them owe their leading positions to Stalin's favor, and they continue to move with their old momentum in the same general direction of policy and doctrine. The important point, however, is that Communist disunity is potentially far more extensive than the Russia-China cleavage.

One entirely novel development is the emergence of new Communist or pro-Communist movements—particularly in Africa or in Latin America—into a Communist world which has lost its old power to impose strict international conformity. The *Polycentrism* contributors find that Castroism and West African Marxism, in particular, are free to adapt to local conditions or pursue their own idiosyncrasies—just as the Russians did in the first place after their own revolution. The new movements of Communism-gone-native have a better chance to succeed than did earlier Communist efforts under the dead hand of Stalinist centralism, but as they succeed they are subject to less and less control, discipline, or theoretical guidance on the part of the Soviet Union. The Russians are reduced to treating their Communist brethren as they would any susceptible neighbor, through diplomacy, pressure, aid, trade, or perhaps even force. With heightened differences and crumbling discipline inside the Communist bloc, it becomes difficult to draw a line between Communists and non-Communist revolutionary nationalists. Both the inner bonds and the outer limits of the movement have become hard to define.

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The contributions both in *The USSR and the Future* and in *Polycentrism* point emphatically toward the prospect of further doctrinal decay and international disunity within the Communist movement. Under these circumstances, a semblance of unity within the bloc can be preserved only through the toleration of ever greater national variations. This is the price that Khrushchev has paid, for instance, in his recent rapprochement with Tito, admitting in effect the old Yugoslav demand of "separate national roads to socialism." But beyond this, even the goal of "socialism" is becoming subject to diverse national definitions and redefinitions. It is doubtful whether there is any longer a binding Marxist unity in the Communist movement. Instead we see a plurality of Marxisms, all distorted one way or another from the original, and each one more and more difficult to reconcile with the others within the limits of one consistent faith.

THE DARK CONTINENT

THE COLONIAL RECKONING. By MARGERY PERHAM. *Knopf. 204 pp. $3.95.*

AFRICA FOR BEGINNERS: A TRAVELLER'S NOTEBOOK. By MELVIN J. LASKY. *Lippincott. 171 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by ROGER OWEN

NOBODY could have predicted ten years ago the almost indecent rapidity with which the greater part of colonial Africa has been unscrambled. In Britain during the last couple of years we have grown accustomed to the rituals of this process—to the emergence of the charismatic nationalist leader; to the constitutional conferences with their ultimatums, deadlocks, and walk-outs; to the surrealist complexity of the franchise systems which cover the interim "holding" period; to the disturbances, imprisonments, and later releases which finally culminate in the great day of Freedom, Kwacha, Uhuru, or what you will. The event is signaled for us in Britain by second headlines in the popular press and by a fat supplement in the *Times* from which we learn (most of us for the first time) the nature and extent of the dominion over which we can lord it no longer. One sometimes feels that it is in the expressions of strained interest on the faces of those minor members of the Royal Family whom we spare to represent us at the Independence celebrations that we find our feelings most accurately mirrored.

Indifference and fatigue, a desire to get it over with and see the end of it all—it would not be surprising if these were the feelings of many people in Britain. The constriction in British power is a dreary and vexing fact from which we protect ourselves with a growing apathy. To what end should we British now concern ourselves with Africa? Can't we let someone else do the worrying? The remaining problems we confront there are of a complexity and toughness against which intelligence seems to operate in vain. As I write, the British face charges of neo-colonialism from the Nigerians and of softness to African nationalism from the white settlers of Rhodesia. Whatever we do is and will be wrong.

That feelings of this kind are common is, of course, an impression rather than a certitude. Nevertheless, there are clues here and there. There was the monumental indifference of the electorate to Africa in the 1959 general election when the Labor party (one sometimes felt that they needed Africa more than Africa needed them) tried to make an issue of it. Again in the reaction of many people to the collapse of democracy in the new Africa and in particular to the excesses of Nkrumahism, one could see signs of doubt and uncertainty—amongst people whose earlier positions had been pleasurably simple and high-minded. Most notably, however—in spite of the large and even disproportionate press coverage which Africa gets—one is frequently surprised by the ignorance among educated people of what is actually happening there. One hopes that both these short books will help to redress the apathy and ignorance which one suspects to be so widespread.

MISS Margery Perham's credentials as a liberal and as a friend of Africa have been proved over her thirty years as a student of colonial policy in that continent. Her recent survey of the British colonial experience there is informed by great knowledge and sympathy and by an exceptional measure of fair-mindedness. Although her book is not

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long, Miss Perham largely avoids any *"simpliste"* formulations, responding to and reflecting almost painfully the many-sidedness of the issues with which she deals.

She can draw our attention firmly to some of the more distasteful characteristics of the new Africa—to, for example, the overwrought, indiscriminate, and unbalanced vein in much anti-colonialist thinking —and she can do this kind of thing steadily and without undue pique. "The relationship between time, event, and idea," she reminds us, "is a rather sophisticated and largely Western idea." If Africans sometimes deploy their arguments against past, present, and future colonialism "unrealistically" and "unhistorically," this is something we must expect and try to understand. This candid recognition of an African deficiency is perhaps unfashionable. If it is, it is because Miss Perham has reacted against the kind of radicalism that can notice only the sameness and not the differences of Africans. The distinction of this book lies in its author's fine sense of history, her sense of why people —black and white—did what they did and do what they do.

Miss Perham's principal concern is to understand the phenomenon of anti-colonialism and to illuminate the process—and this is the book's relevance to Americans—by which even "the very possession of military and economic power is itself to be considered discreditable." To this end she discusses the special nature of African nationalism (most African nations, of course, have none of the classical "necessary" characteristics of nationhood such as a common language, customs, or religion) and the British response to it. She moves on to a consideration of the problems of white settlement in Kenya and the Rhodesias, a subject which provokes the despairing statement that "there are times when it seems that the problems Africa sets to black and white living together are beyond a rational solution," a sentiment with which some of Britain's postwar Colonial Secretaries, harassed and hounded by black and white, would probably agree. Miss Perham concludes by rendering, in spite of some disclaimers about the possibility of doing so, a kind of approximate moral balance sheet on the imperial story. Britain can debit the slave trade, for example, and credit the long tradition of genuine philanthropy which found expression in such bodies as the Aborigines Protection Society. Britain's record has always been "mixed," her motives never either entirely pure or impure, but on the whole it is the record of "the most humane of the modern Colonial powers." As she looks to the future, Miss Perham reminds us that Africa is "vulnerable" and that the next two or three years are likely to be critical. Her prescriptions are unexceptional but generalized. She enjoins the West to understand and help Africa now. There is nothing very new here, of course, but it is not so much the novelty as the force, balance, and comprehensiveness of this book which makes it worth reading.

"You taught me language and my profit on it is I know how to curse," says Caliban to the God-like settler on his island. In her chapter on African nationalism, Miss Perham reminds us that in "sonorous English" (there is perhaps the faintest suggestion of humor in that phrase) the African elite invoked "the Bible, Blackstone, Burke and Shakespeare" to enforce their case. Later the case would include the Leninist idea of economic imperialism, itself partly derived from the work of the British radical, J. A. Hobson. Armed with such ideas, the future leaders of Africa inhabited a "mental no-man's-land" between the tribe and the white communities which rejected them. The trip to Britain for higher education that sometimes followed brought with it an intoxicating sense of intellectual freedom and social release and perhaps for some "the supreme racial compensation of sexual intercourse with a white woman." Not surprisingly, the return home to rejection by the white man and alienation from the family imposed unbearable strains. Many of the early leaders of nationalist movements, Miss Perham suggests, were in "a pathological state of mind" —and she is wise to draw our attention to this. For it is precisely this feeling—this sense of *personal* outrage—that gives African nationalism its enormous dynamic, a dynamic without which its immense, and for the most part, peaceful achievements would not have been possible. The dynamic is one which in some parts of Africa white men are still foolish enough to feed. Only a couple of months ago, one heard with dismay that

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Kenneth Kaunda, the distinguished and moderate African leader in Northern Rhodesia, had been searched and detained for several hours at Salisbury airport.

In her chapter on white settlement, Miss Perham's sympathies move in both directions, but it is worth looking especially closely at what she says about the settlers themselves. One central and elementary fact about the Rhodesias, for instance, is that the settlers there are *settlers* and not anthropologists seeing Africans only ethnocentrically in terms of their own European culture. Of course they are wrong in thinking they are "superior" to Africans (though rather less wrong in thinking they can run a sophisticated money economy more efficiently), but Miss Perham rightly points out that it would be equally wrong to "rebound to the opposite extreme and to assume that the incoming Europeans had no reason at all for their view." This again is worth saying. In Africa one feels that a good deal of the discussion of racial questions is bedeviled by a kind of abstract psychologizing from which are derived such statements as that the European's "stereotype" of the African is the rationalization of his own needs and the projection of his own fears, etc. It is painfully obvious that this is true, but what is also true is that settlers in their encounters with Africans, most usually uneducated servants and laborers, are daily confronted with signals from the solid, outside world which even the most disinterested person could forgivably misinterpret. It is because she understands this, as she understands many other things less flattering to the white man, that Miss Perham can describe Sir Roy Welensky, with whom she profoundly disagrees, as a "courageous man" (he was once called a "race-crazy engine driver" by the *New Statesman*) and can even suggest that in theory the White Rhodesian policy of gradualism is sound, even though she must add that at the present juncture it is pathetically irrelevant.

At one point in her discussion of Kenya and the Rhodesias, Miss Perham shrewdly quotes a sentence from Theodore Roosevelt's book, *The Winning of the West*. "The settlers and the pioneers have at bottom," he wrote, "had justice on their side: this great continent could not have been kept as nothing but a game reserve for squalid savages." This is the kind of sentiment—couched perhaps in slightly more genteel language—which one could confidently expect to hear from the lips of some particularly minor and particularly reactionary settler politician in Africa even now. It is certainly not the kind of sentiment which one associates with the contemporary American presence there. Miss Perham does not ignore the very considerable and beneficial influence of the United States on the postwar liberation of Africa. During the last war, she tells us, she found herself at one point in the United States attempting to qualify the vigor of anti-imperialist feeling there and to correct the "distorted" view of the character of the British Empire which it expressed. With the anti-colonial battle all but won, the need for such American fervor has perhaps gone and it is probable in the future that the United States will anomalously carry the burden of many future charges of colonialism and neo-colonialism. In the meantime, to most Africans Americans appear comparatively untainted. They can observe the post-imperial scene with detachment or at least with the attitude ascribed to himself by Mr. Melvin Lasky in his book, which he calls "a complex of curiosity and naïveté."

THE curiosity is undoubtedly there in Mr. Lasky's book—in fact it gives his writing about Africa the very quality of energy and appetite so totally lacking by now among the British—but one has doubts about the naïveté. Mr. Lasky is too incorrigibly literate and well-educated to be an Innocent Abroad, as is shown by the epigraphs, chapter headings, quotations, allusions, and literary footnotes which freight his admirable text. Certainly he has read many a book like Miss Perham's, and if he has added his own to the growing mountain of recent books on the subject, it is because he has felt the need for something which would give detail, substance, and flavor to the kind of general ideas which she and other writers have provided. All this he gives us in abundance: in his pages we can confront an individual, near "pathological" African—listen to the true accent of contemporary anti-colonialism.

Mr. Lasky confines himself to impressions and reportage of Nigeria, Ghana, the Sudan,

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and Ethiopia, and his pieces—written first for *Encounter*—are set down hurriedly with an almost boyish gusto and excitement. He doesn't bother overly much with the physicality of Africa, so we are spared rich, beautiful prose, but what he does set out to capture is its voice. Mr. Lasky's appetite for written and spoken matter is voracious. He devours the printed word, newspapers, periodicals, hand-outs, pamphlets, even advertising slogans, with a relish he succeeds in passing on. His quotations from these sources are frequent, illuminating, and often very funny. He has written, then, the *intellectual's* guide-book, and it is typical that he should describe himself as being "in the thick of things" in Ghana when he simply meant that he had raided the airport newspaper kiosk on arrival and had himself a good read.

He is also an indefatigable overhearer and starter of conversations. Some of the best parts of his book are the reported thoughts, almost a collection of dramatic monologues, of the people he spoke to: Nigerian poet, English expatriate, tribal chief, Lagos woman, foreign expert, Ghanaian Minister, etc., etc. A certain sameness in their conversational styles perhaps reveals the editorializing hand, but for all that the method works well. The handbook's "vital facts" are lightly interpolated or susceptible to inference, while ideas, attitudes, opinions erupt everywhere, leaving one with a sense of the density and reality of their source. Of the many good things in the book one will recall the refreshingly meaty and unmystical opinions of the Nigerian intellectual with whom Mr. Lasky discussed the idea of *"Négritude"*; the sad observation ("I will marry for romantic love and live monogomously. How can I afford more than one wife on £750 a year?") of the Nigerian civil servant; the impudence of the closely supervized opposition paper in Ghana which ran a serial on "The Assassination of Presidents"; the delight and optimism which Nigeria prompted in the author. Altogether Mr. Lasky's book is an excellent piece of journalism, as well as a valuable complement to such general studies as Miss Perham's.

From each of these books one central and inescapable point emerges. To deal with Africa intelligently we must understand and sympathize with the unique cultural experience which Africa has undergone. In dealing with this literally shocking experience, Africans are not likely to behave in ways which we find worthy of unqualified approval. Their task is to create nation-states out of the meaningless entities that have been left to them and to accommodate within these states the pains, the profound humiliations of their past. The sense of outrage will take a long time to heal.

TERRORISM

THE DEED. By GEROLD FRANK. *Simon and Schuster. 317 pp. $4.95.*

Reviewed by WERNER J. DANNHAUSER

ON November 6, 1944, in Cairo, Lord Moyne, British Minister of State in the Middle East, was assassinated by two members of the Stern Gang; the youths, aged twenty-two and seventeen, were subsequently hanged for the deed by the British. In this book, Gerold Frank—who has heretofore dealt (as the "as-told-to" biographer of notables like Diana Barrymore, Sheilah Graham, Lillian Roth, and Zsa Zsa Gabor) in psychological rather than political compulsions—takes it upon himself to become "the historian of such an event," to attempt to discover and to explain "how such a thing came to be."

A book dealing with terrorism and political assassination for the sake of the establishment of the State of Israel raises certain expectations, even when, as is the case with *The Deed*, it does not necessarily treat of the most important example of such acts. The King David Hotel, for example, was blown up in July 1946; Count Folke Bernadotte, the Swedish mediator for the U.N., was assassinated in September 1948: the Irgun would, on the whole, be a more rewarding object of study of the dynamics of terrorism than the Stern Gang. Nevertheless "the deed" raises crucial questions. We all want to know how such a thing could "come to be," and Mr. Frank is surely entitled to concentrate on that fragment of the larger story with which he is most familiar (he attended the trial of the two boys). Indeed, the limited area he has selected might even have served to put the larger questions

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into sharper focus. From a book like this one, the reader seeks to discover, for example, whether terrorism was either directly useful in securing Jewish independence, or indirectly useful in forcing the Jewish community to become more militant. (One suspects that a disturbingly good case might be made for the latter possibility.) Jabotinsky was a foolish and irresponsible tactician but he knew one big thing: ultimately the Jews would have to fight. This was not always realized with sufficient clarity by the Jewish Agency and its leaders. Beyond this, terrorism raises more general questions which must be faced, since it is illegal activity justifying itself by a higher law, and assassinations provide a testing ground and a stumbling block for all theories of history which maintain that history is predictable.

This book could reasonably be expected, not indeed to answer such questions, but to help us deal with them. It does not. The author views the young assassins in the most simplistic and predictable way of all—as idealists pursuing a noble end by foul means. The means are foul on fundamentalist grounds, because the Bible says "Thou shalt not kill," and Mr. Frank refuses, or is unable, to engage with the question in any profounder way. He does not see that the effectiveness of means poses problems more subtle and equally moral. Content with having discovered a fatal tension, an irreconcilable conflict, and therefore a tragedy, he proceeds merely to "tell the story" of the two boys. Comforted by the notion that historians ought to give only the facts, he thinks he is excused from exercising judgment. A question like "What effect did the deed have?" is a matter "for future historians." Typical of Mr. Frank's assessments is the one he gives of Jabotinsky: ". . . denounced by many as a dangerous adventurer, even a fascist, [but] praised by others as a prophetic statesman. . . ." Such abdication of judgment on all interesting matters is only apparently humility, because the author's sympathy for the terrorists and antipathy for the British come through quite plainly. He sticks to the facts only when it suits his purpose, which appears to be the creation of a true tragedy written with Restrained Power, Olympian Detachment, and Noble Simplicity. When he wishes to, indeed, our historian of the event is able to tell us, for example, what went on in the minds of the actors, and even what they did when they were entirely unobserved. Though the author scarcely had the means for acquiring such information, we are told, for example, that alone in his office Lord Moyne was given to frequent sighing, and we are even treated to a transcript of his stream of consciousness on the last day of his life. He thinks thoughts like "Palestine, always Palestine," and in one of those small, though infuriating evidences of the slapdash approach, we are told that he reckons November 1944 as the sixtieth month of the war, when it was in fact the sixty-third. As a historian, Mr. Frank does not trust history to be interesting enough on its own, and therefore comes to its aid with a barrage of gimmicks, including flashbacks, portents, and purple prose.

SUCH CRITICISM would be merely churlish if the author had succeeded in bringing the two boys vividly before our eyes, in explaining to us what they were like. He would then have told us a human story of youths caught in the web of history. But this is done best in novels, and *The Deed,* attempting to be more than a novel, is a good deal less. The book exists somewhere between history and drama: the history is suspect because the author refuses to "play it straight"; the drama becomes impossible because the characters always talk as if they were Making History.

We never really find out what the two boys were like. We are told that the fundamental fact about them was their belief that by their deed they would change the course of history, but very little more is made of this. We are also told that they were products of their time, without being informed why so few other "products of their time" became terrorists. We are given adjectives that describe them: they were sensitive, intelligent, troubled, and so on, but they are never more than stock figures; they are described but they never come alive. This is not because there are not enough details in the book, but rather because there are too many. The author seems to have included everything he could find out, without any discernible principle of organization or selection.

In a welter of irrelevant detail (for instance, who sat next to Mr. Frank at the

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trial), there are bound also to be incidentally interesting things. The reader is struck again and again by the youth of those connected with the Stern Gang, its leaders having been in their early thirties and its members frequently under twenty. It is fascinating to discover, for example, that Bet Zouri, the older and more intellectual of the assassins, was an admirer of Kipling, Saroyan, and Jack London; and there are amusing glimpses of the British in a state of befuddlement—unaccustomed to such behavior on the part of their colonials. Details like these might some day be used by somebody to write a good book about "the deed."

Mr. Frank has written a poor book, so crammed with stock situations, that one both dreads and anticipates its being made into a movie. The adapters will have an easy job, for when the characters are not speaking as if they were in history, they speak as if they were already in a movie. The Arabs refer to Allah, the British keep their upper lips stiff, and the terrorists are properly ascetic. The big scenes are included: initiation into the movement, complete with glaring flashlight in a dark room, chases through crowded Middle Eastern streets, plans made with great care only to be foiled by chance, the requisite courtroom scene, etc. Between the introductory note to the reader and Chapter One, there is even included a "Cast of Characters."

One ought not to be outraged by a book so silly and confused. But when one thinks of all the well-meaning American Jews who will feel it their duty to buy the book and recommend it to their Christian friends—because such books are vaguely thought to be good for the Jews—one ought to feel ever so slightly indignant, and perhaps a little sad.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

LEWIS A. COSER is professor of sociology at Brandeis University and an editor of *Dissent*.

J. G. WEIGHTMAN teaches French literature at King's College, London.

E. F. SCHUMACHER'S "A Humanistic Guide to Foreign Aid" appeared in our November 1961 issue.

ROBERT V. DANIELS'S most recent book is *The Nature of Communism*.

ROGER OWEN is a young English writer who lived for a number of years in Africa.

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